

## The Other Shoe – Chapter 12

“Call Hank and Harry, I think maybe we should learn more.”

“I’ll be right back.”

“This is Swede, who’s on the radio?”

“This is Lynn, what’s up?”

“Two guys at the library, tell Hank and Harry I’ll see them in 45 minutes.”

“10-4.”

We showed up right on schedule and introductions were made all around. The older of the two was Frank Cassidy and the younger Jeb Smith. Their group had 6 families and generally met the criteria we had established. They had reinforced their basements creating shelters and had been in the market for a piece of property when the war came. Each had the minimum MAG required one year supply of food and most had several times that. Their MAG also had weapons requirements, ammo requirements, vehicle requirements and a whole lot of well-thought-out rules.

I went on to explain our situation, including the fact that we had one terminally ill member of our group. The sticking point seemed to be housing, we were one trailer short. There weren’t any more in Jefferson City because we’d cleaned them out. Frank said if we could add plumbing for another trailer, they would provide the trailer. They had one, but it wasn’t 400ft<sup>2</sup>. Under the circumstances, it would do until something larger was found. They went on to discuss each family in their MAG, indicating the number, gender and age of the children. One family also included the wife’s older sister.

There was also a family that consisted solely of two twin brothers. One criterion for joining their MAG had been that at least one member of each family had military service. With the exception of the twins, they were generally the head of the house. Both twins had served in Iraq in the Army and the older sister had served 20 years in the Army.

The sister, Stephanie, was a bit of an oddball or individualist. She rode and had her own Arabian stallion. She had more firearms than the remainder of the MAG put together. She was 39 years old, if anyone cared. Apparently before the war, she’d had two boyfriends, neither of them a steady. Her weapons collection included an M25 and an M21. For regular use, she used a Super Match, but had a Loaded for a loaner. Her handgun collection included a USP Tactical with suppressor, a Kimber Tactical II, a .357 revolver and assorted .22 revolvers and pistols. Her favorite pistol was the Ruger Mark II with integral suppressor.

“What about cowboy guns for when she rides?”

"I can only tell you about the ones I know about. She has Winchester rifles in .45 Colt and .44 Remington magnum. She has a Ruger Super Blackhawk in .44 magnum and a pair of 1995 Ruger Vaqueros in .45 Colt, one 7½" and one 4⅝". She wears something called a Laredoan crossdraw. On top of that she has an 1895 Cowboy in .45-70. You know the gun?"

"We have some so yes, I know the gun."

"What's in it for us to move to your place?"

"Housing and most of the modern amenities. A large supply of various fuels, a greenhouse, and probably most importantly there's safety in numbers. We're feeling the pinch in that area and that's why we're making the offer."

"Honest too. What are the chances of seeing this place?"

"Could you live with being blindfolded until we got there? Even at that, the location is a bit distinctive and you could probably find it again if your motives were less than honorable. I don't believe they are so I'm willing to risk it."

"Thanks for that, I guess."

"I'll tell you one thing up front. It is not as far away as our delay in getting here would indicate. I wouldn't be telling that to you fellas if I wasn't fairly certain you're the good guys."

"You hear that Jeb, we're the good guys. Keep up the pretense, it's working," Frank laughed. "We're taking a lot on faith too. You have us outnumbered and possibly out-gunned, you know."

"So we're both taking a chance. Does that even things out?"

"Ask me the same question when we're done and if I can answer it, the answer will probably be yes."

We went ahead with the blindfolds and were back at the acreage in 15 minutes. Jeb looked at his watch and whistled because the drive back had been so quick. They started to examine everything, the trailers, fuel supplies, woodpile, ice house, smoke house and possible defenses.

"I'd say we could put one more trailer here, what do you think Hank?"

"We can extend the pipes to this spot and let gravity do most of the work, Frank."

"Off hand, I'd say this is a go."

“You said you had six families and 7 had military experience including what’s-her-name. What about the rest, we have a Ranger, a Special Forces and I was a Marine.”

“One SEAL, one Marine FORECON, one Marine Infantry, three Army Infantry and one Air Force Combat Controller.”

“Same problem as we had before.”

“What’s that?”

“All Chiefs and no Indians.”

“Two Army Infantry and I understand that Stephanie did a tour in Iraq as an MP.”

“Can we put aside the inter-service rivalry enough to work together?”

“Have the three of you been able to?”

“Yep.”

“We have too. I suspect when they’re shooting at us we’ll all be on the same side.”

“Do you need to talk to your people before you decide? I have no doubt that we’ll accept, but I believe we should.”

“Pick a frequency on, say, 20 meters and a date and time. We’ll call and let you know.”

“How about 48 hours? Well, make it 7pm two days from now.”

“And the frequency?”

“How about 14.175mhz?”

“Ok, 14.175 at 7pm two days from now. I expect the answer will be yes. If you leave the blindfolds off, we’ll know how to get here.”

“How about we meet you half way on that? We’re near Edgar Springs. If the answer is yes, we’ll meet you in Edgar Springs and lead you back here without the blindfolds.”

“Well ok, you’ll take off the blind folds when we get to Edgar Springs?”

“We’ll tell you and you can take them off yourselves.”

No doubt you’ve seen movies where the hero is able to reconstruct where he was based on where he is and the feel and sounds of the road getting there from where he started out. It’s claimed that when a person is blindfolded, the other senses are height-

ened. Maybe so if the blindfolded person just listens. Thus we engaged them in conversation until we were past Edgar Springs and then told them to remove the blindfolds. We dropped them off in Licking and waited for an hour after they'd left.

"Well, what do you think?"

"I thought we were going to talk this over with our wives."

"We will, individually, but I can't see the need for a meeting. I favor having them join us. Harry?"

"I agree. Swede?"

"Yeah, me too. Who will be in charge of security?"

"Which of all of the operators has the broadest experience?"

"The SEAL."

"Yep, that's what I think. Harry?"

"Whatever."

Harry was probably thinking about Sally. She'd taken a turn for the worse and was beginning to pass blood according to Lynn. The doctor had warned her it was possible, even likely, and there wasn't a lot they could do about it under the present circumstances. Even before the war, her chances were quite low considering how advanced the disease was. It would have taken surgeries and chemotherapy. He told her he suspected that her condition was related to the radiation therapy she'd received for the benign tumor.

Once we three had agreed to go forward with the merger, each of us brought it up at home. Sally flat out said she wouldn't be here that long so she didn't give a damn. Susan told Swede to do whatever he wanted and she'd back him up. Lynn had more questions than a two year old. There were questions about the other group's military qualifications, what did we know about their families; so many I can't remember them now. She did seem to be impressed that most of them were some kind of Special Forces.

Lynn finally agreed claiming we'd probably already made up our minds anyway. I didn't acknowledge that she was right. When they called the next night at 7pm, I told them we were agreeable if they were. Frank said they'd be at Edgar Springs around noon the next day. We already had the pipes in for diesel, water and septic, electing to do that before I talked to Lynn.

We were waiting in Edgar Springs the next day. When they showed up, one of them was pulling a 36' travel trailer with only one pullout. Another was pulling a four stall

horse trailer holding one horse. I got a look at Stephanie and she wasn't overly pretty, but not so ugly you couldn't look at her. If she'd been named Jane, her first initial would have been P. (plain). Lynn took one look at her and said, "Humph." Then, she went over and struck up a conversation with her about Stephanie's Arabian Stallion. It would take a woman with almost no self-confidence to let Stephanie bother her. I was more interested in how well she could shoot and if she had any more guns than the ones Frank and Jeb mentioned.

By the end of the day, everyone was moved in and settled and the 36' trailer connected and inhabited. The family Stephanie was living with had a former Marine as head of the family and two kids. Stephanie had been sleeping on the couch since the war. Let's see if I can remember the names. Frank's wife was named Shirley. They had two kids named Lloyd and Donald. Jeb's wife's name was Janet. They had one child, Julie, age three. There was Charles, his wife Anna, sister-in-law Stephanie and three children Ronald, George and Sara. David was married to Mary and they had two adolescent daughters, Jennifer and Kathryn. Finally, the folks with their own trailer were Henry and Marilyn and their two preschool age kids, Elizabeth and Joshua. I hadn't matched the service branches to the families, except for Stephanie – Army. I didn't have all of the last names. The twins were named David and Donald and both single.

Most of the guns were .308 or 5.56 NATO. Pistols ran to 1911s, and Browning's. All of the pistols except for holdouts were .45ACP or 9x19mm. Frank covered Stephanie's cowboy guns, a different gun for every circumstance. One could only presume she knew how to use them.

The following morning Harry came to the door, knocked, came in and sat down.

"What's wrong, you look like you've seen a ghost?"

"When she went to bed last night, Sally was complaining that she was losing more blood. I asked if we should go back to Jefferson City and she said no."

"Are you going today?"

"It wouldn't do any good guys, Sally died last night in her sleep."

"Oh man, I'm sorry."

"She mentioned to me that she thought her time was short, didn't she mention it to you Harry?"

"Not one word Lynn. I assume she concluded that it wouldn't do any good and thought that it would be easier on everyone if she went to sleep and didn't wake up."

"What can we do?"

"We'll need a grave and a coffin. I thought maybe you could get Swede to help and take care of that Hank. Lynn, Susan and you could take care of getting her cleaned up and dressed."

"Where do you want her grave?"

"How about under that oak that's at the lower edge of your property?"

"Swede and I will take care of it. I'll tell Frank and he can pass it on to his group. Lynn, I think the sooner we lay her to rest the better, how long to get her ready?"

"Maybe 3-4 hours."

"Harry, we can have a service tomorrow. Why don't you get a cup of coffee, tea or a drink and I'll go get with Frank and Swede?"

"Got any tequila?"

"In the portable bar, help yourself."

"Frank, Harry's wife Sally died last night."

"I'm sorry, Hank. Is there anything I can do?"

"Don't suppose you could build a coffin could you?"

"Do you have the materials?"

"Let me show you."

I took him to the cave and showed him the materials stored inside of the door. There was plywood and 1x2s to build the coffin.

"When did you intend to show us this?"

"Later today; we wanted you moved in before we revealed our biggest asset. Think you can come up with a 2x2x6' box?"

"No problem. When will you hold the service?"

"Tomorrow morning. I hoped you would attend even though not all of you had met her. Uterine sarcoma and when it was discovered she was in stage IIIc."

"Treatable?"

“Might have been if it weren’t a Post Apocalyptical World (PAW). It had metastasized so she probably didn’t have much of a chance.”

“We’ll take care of it. We’ll find someone to help out Harry with his trailer for a few days.”

“Thanks Frank. Gotta get Swede and get the grave dug.”

“What’s his real name?”

“Swede? His name is Norman Johansson.”

“The introductions were a bit brief and we were having trouble remembering them. Then the question came up whether Swede was a nickname.”

“I gave up and wrote them down before I forgot.”

“I got the adults, but don’t have your kids.”

“That’s complicated; we had two sets of twins, a boy and a girl both times. We have firearms put up for the kids for when they grow into them in 8-10 years. Our oldest two are Charles and Cynthia, Chuck and Cindy. The younger pair’s names are Lynette and Mark. They’re 15 months younger than Chuck and Cindy. I’m giving you their names in order of their birth.”

I got Swede and filled him in. I took the backhoe and he rode along carrying a shovel. We dug the grave as close to 3’x7’ as we could and he climbed in and level it out. The thought of going to Licking for the minister briefly passed my mind, but anyone can say a prayer over a grave and God will listen.

By the time we’d finished, the girls had Sally ready and Lynn had gotten Shirley to watch the kids. A wake was held allowing those of us who knew Sally to say a few words so the newcomers knew a little more about her. The following morning around 10am Sally was transferred to the coffin and transported to the grave. After we lowered her coffin, those of us who spoke at the wake said a few more words and repeated both The Lord’s Prayer and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm; the former from memory and the latter from the KJV of the Bible.

After the grave was filled, Frank took me aside and asked if it would be okay for Stephanie to lend a hand cleaning Harry’s trailer and preparing meals for him in the event he wasn’t invited somewhere to eat. I told him I presumed it would but that I’d have to check with Harry.

“Thanks for the service Hank, I’ll be eternally grateful.”

“That’s what friends are for, forget it. The reason I’m here is that the new group wants to provide someone to give you a hand with cleaning and cooking. I told Frank I’d ask before I okayed it.”

“Who did they have in mind?”

“Stephanie because she has the most free time. You’re invited to our cabin for dinner tonight. I’d speculate that everyone will offer a meal or two while you’re in mourning. Sally kept a good house and it would only take Stephanie a few minutes a day to pick up and dust.”

“Do you think she would mind boxing up Sally’s clothes for me? Someone else might get some good from them and I started but just don’t have the heart.”

“I’ll ask, but I’d imagine she’d be willing.”

“Okay, thanks, I’d appreciate the help. Twenty-five years going on twenty-six. It just doesn’t seem fair.”

“Nothing is fair; it is just how it is.”

“Maybe, but it still isn’t fair. If they knew that those radiation treatment years ago could eventually cause cancer, they should have said something and she might have seen a doctor sooner.”

“I’ll seed her grave tomorrow and it should grow fairly fast. I don’t know what we can do about a headstone.”

“I’ll get a piece of limestone and chisel out something appropriate. Thanks for everything Hank.”

“Dinner will be at six.”

“Did you remember to invite Harry for dinner?”

“I told him 6pm.”

“I’m going to do fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy. Corn or green beans?”

“How about corn?”

“Canned or frozen on the cob?”

“I picked the vegetable, you pick the flavor.”

“Okay, corn on the cob.”



“We don’t really need that icehouse any longer since we have so many freezers.”

“It’s awfully small, what could you convert it to?”

“I was thinking maybe a larger smokehouse. I’ll have to ask Henry and Marilyn if they have a freezer. If they don’t we’ll find them one up in Rolla. I know that the rest all do because we supplied the trailers with those, a wood stove, propane kitchen stove and the electric hot water heater plus the stacked laundry centers.”

Since we hadn’t taken anything that wasn’t survival oriented during our salvage operations, my conscience was clear. My conscience was also clear about killing that hunter so many years before. I could have been wrong on that deal; he could have been reaching for a first aid kit. But, like I told Randy, it was a hell of a place to keep a first aid kit. At least Randy wouldn’t be hungry anymore and mooching meals. Anyone need a German Karabiner 98K Mauser? It fires the 7.92x57mm IS cartridge.

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The newcomers brought a whole different skill set. They had in their midst a diesel mechanic who claimed he could rebuild any diesel made. Harry’s propane generator had been replaced with a diesel and we had parts kits for every generator. The propane generator was moved back by the cave near the propane tank and was available for the cave. Sorry if I’m repeating myself, just trying to keep you in the loop. Another fella was an over the road tractor trailer operator. One was a Deputy Sheriff. Another cut meat for a grocery store. One was a carpenter and the last one a plumber.

The SEAL in their group was the Deputy. As a Deputy he had one advantage over the remainder of his group and us; he could legally own fully automatic weapons. His Sheriff was lenient in that regard and readily provided the letters on Department Letterhead to allow his Deputies to acquire weapons. Perhaps he realized that doing that meant the Deputies were signing up for a lifetime career because they’d be unwilling to give up their weapons should they leave the Sheriff’s Department. Interesting question; if a LEO legally acquires a machinegun made after the FOPA went into effect, can he still own it when he retires? Not that it applies in the current circumstances, I was just curious. We didn’t really have all that many machineguns.

“I would have expected you’d have your sniper rifles equipped with suppressors.”

“The only one we have is for a HK-417 that we recovered from a dead prepper.”

“Are you familiar with the FA762S?”

“What is it?”

“A suppressor made by a company in Fountain Valley, California. The FA denotes ‘Fast Attach’ and the 762 the caliber. The ‘S’ denotes it’s for a rifle as opposed to a machinegun.”

“Silencers don’t really silencer a firearm anyway.”

“True, but it adds about 50fps to the bullet and improves the accuracy of the rifle.”

“It would take several because we have all kinds of M1As.”

“If I could provide several with the adapters, then what?”

“I guess it would be worth a try. More for the improved the rifle accuracy than the silencing effect.”

“Bring your rifles by one at a time and I’ll install them.”

“Ok David, we’ll give it a try. I don’t know how much it good it will do; my Super Match is very accurate.”

David had more suppressors than we had .308 NATO rifles, excluding those we acquired for our kids when they grew up. I’ll have to admit, though, that the rifle was far quieter than I expected and it was marginally more accurate. Not enough to justify spending the price of the suppressor, some \$1,700, but when the suppressor was free, it was better to have one than not. David said that the company claimed they’d never worn one out. We also added them to our 4 M4s (FA556A).

David, although younger than many of the others, was a SEAL and only recently separated from active services and become a Deputy. He was stuck with the position of head of security and providing any training he thought we might need. At least, he didn’t try to put us through Hell Week. He had tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan, especially the latter where he’d been in country for a long time.

His first step was to certify everyone on the range and make certain they could handle the weapons of their choice. That included a rifle, handgun and, in addition for some, a shotgun. The heavier weapons, excluding the machineguns, were in short supply and never fired. One LAW rocket was used over and over to teach functioning without actually being fired. We had accidently picked up a box containing M-69 practice grenades and extra fuzes and we used all of those.

## The Other Shoe – Chapter 13

The Claymore mines were installed without tripwires and the two guards on duty each had the clackers in their fighting positions. Why don't they call them foxholes anymore? Defensive fighting positions sounds so, well you know what I mean, no zing. Sandbags? You bettcha, covered with soil and leaves to conceal their true purpose. The M2 went in one and the M240 in the other. The other two were put in foxholes closer to the trailers, but not so close that a miss would hole a trailer. You do recall we took 2 of each so we had a spare, don't you?

That was when David got a wild hair and decided that the trailers and cabin should be behind a berm. Thick enough, he said, so no stray rounds could punch through and ventilate a trailer. There was just enough room around each end to move a trailer or the tanker trailers. We'd made another trip to Jefferson City and refilled the empty tanker and learned that they were using the same fuel depot and saw our note.

From that point on, someone was always out scavenging. They were looking for a short list of specific items plus anything we, as a group, could make good use of. One thing always in demand was clothing for the growing children. We had a greatly improved first aid kit courtesy of the MAG. They had a bit of everything, including things to replace lost blood volume and quite a few blood stopper bandages. It was just something they assembled for when they acquired their property. They, in fact, had an offer out on a piece of property when the war happened. With the owner in residence, they hadn't tried to take the place over.

We muddled through yet another winter and this time actually got snow. Problem this time was when it started; it didn't have the good sense to know when to stop. Our accumulation was several orders less than we expected; however, it snowed a little nearly every day.

Somehow the topic of conversation turned to religion, especially Christianity, because everyone here was a Christian. One group insisted that we were in the 1,000-years of Tribulation that followed the Battle of Armageddon. The rest seemed to think that we hadn't had the battle, but once we did, Tribulation would begin. When St. John the Divine wrote Revelations, he made it clear that Christ and the Anti-Christ would meet in battle on the plain of Megiddo aka Har Megiddo aka Armageddon. We didn't know what went down in the Middle East, but from our viewpoint such a battle was beyond our vision.

Did that mean we were scheduled for 1,000-years of peace? That would be a nice change, let me tell you. If it were broader in scope and referred to was between nations, we could still have local troubles. For that reason, and that reason alone, we prepared to the utmost of our ability. We three couples and the other five couples, with Stephanie temporarily taking Sally's place constituted a force of 16, not counting the older children. Counting all of the teens, we numbered 22, with 4 of the 5 teens being effective for a defensive mission. The other could guard the children.

Once satisfied with everyone's skills and the minimal defenses installed, David posted a guard schedule based on 4 on and 12 off. We divided into two groups, one to work the greenhouse and the other to harvest firewood. The MAG group had two Stihl chainsaws with long blades and one with a shorter 24" blade. There were freestanding dead trees all over when we began to search a larger area. They were cut to an 8' length and taken home where two worked on splitting and stacking.

Our goal was to cut 12,800ft<sup>3</sup> of firewood, 100 cords. Once completed, we'd work each winter to return our existing stock to our base level of 100 cords. It served two purposes, the first and obvious was to keep a supply of firewood. The second, less obvious, reason was to keep the National Forest as clear of fuel for potential forest fires as we could.

However, we reached our goal much earlier than planned and as a result, kept cutting splitting and stacking. We posted notes on the bulletin boards in Licking advertising firewood for \$150 a cord, delivered. We noted we'd take gold, silver or trade goods depending on what was being offered; cigarettes and coffee brought a slight premium. They were instructed to meet us on Fridays between noon and 2pm at the Licking Library.

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You shouldn't get the impression we were out of or low on coffee and cigarettes, we weren't. They were the most rapidly consumed items and we'd prefer a large back stock as opposed to a smaller 2 year supply. The only reason I could use to explain my pack a day habit was my concerns for our long term well-being.

The nicest part of living on the acreage was still having modern conveniences and electricity. We had generators and PV panels, but not one wind turbine. I'd noticed that at the top of the bluff, the wind really blew, probably on the order of 15mph most of the time. A wind turbine large enough to provide power for the cabin, 7 trailers (Harry's plus the six newcomers') and the cave wasn't your typical home installation. Harry and I discussed it and agreed we'd want a 1,000 amp turbine that put out 48vdc with several submarine batteries and several magnum sized inverters putting out 120/240vac. Triple redundancy was the goal, but whether or not we could achieve it remained to be seen. Kilowatt wise, we were looking at 120-125kw.

They made smaller, of course, and bigger; however did they make one in our size range? It was time to read the files on my computer under the heading: Wind. I found that a Vestas 120kw wind turbine would be the perfect choice. I also learned that there were quite a few installed one state to the north, Iowa. However, without several submarines worth of batteries, we couldn't store much electricity. The turbines have a blade diameter of approximately 66 feet and were mounted on tubular towers, with an 80 foot hub height. They were made in Denmark and imported, but lots had been imported.

We could go to Liberal, Kansas or Nevada, Iowa, just two places on my list of installations nearby. We didn't want to go north where the snow might hamper our search, leaving Kansas. Liberal was roughly 575 miles west, while Nevada was much closer, roughly 390 miles. If we waited until the snow melted, either place would do and closer is better.

Do you want to know how to dismantle, move and reassemble a 120kw wind turbine? I can tell you in two words, very carefully. Since we had no large batteries the power produced by the wind turbine (48v dc) was to be inverted to ac before we brought it down the bluff through some very heavy gauge wires, one set for each facility. Four of us went and everyone else stayed home to provide security.

Nevada, Iowa was a small town. I'd guess around 6,500 before the war. It was the County Seat for Story County. The big city, Ames, was a few miles to the west. We got off I-35 before we got close to Ames and went cross country until we arrived in Nevada. We didn't see any people, so we looked around. A notice posted several places around the town said, 'Population relocated to Ames, town has been stripped.'

The wind turbine was right there inside town. It wasn't operating at the moment. Then again, there wasn't much wind. They had been erecting a second wind turbine and about all we had to do was unbolt the tower, disassemble it into two pieces and load it on the first semi. The generator and clamshell for it were still in boxes, making it even easier. The last items to load were the large inverter and associated equipment. We still had an empty truck so we loaded it with those big spools of heavy gauge wire. It had taken one 10-hour day to dismantle what had probably taken weeks to assemble. Frank grabbed a set of blueprints and several books on the equipment.

"Man, I'm tired. Do you want to stop to rest or drive straight through to home?"

"How about we drive to the border and then pull off this side of Kirksville?"

"Okay, that's about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the way home."

"It is closer to half way home. We should get there about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 hours after we leave in the morning."

"I guess you may be right. Stop north of Kirksville and leave before dawn?"

"The fewer people that see this load, the better. We'd better figure out some way to skirt Jefferson City and Rolla."

"We can go around Jefferson City, but there's no way around Rolla. We should be within radio range and could call the camp and have some of them meet us north of Rolla."

"We'll sleep on it and decide in the morning. The 20-meter IC-7000 radio will reach the camp and we can call them anytime. I asked Lynn to monitor 14.175mhz 24/7, just in case."

"I put my Yaesu FT-857D in my truck for the same reason and my wife is monitoring the same frequency."

"Call her and fill her in. Tell her that Lynn and she can take turns monitoring the frequency and with luck, we'll be home before noon."

"Anything special you want passed to Lynn?"

"Just that I love her and will see her tomorrow."

However, it didn't quite work out that way. There was no way to really bypass Kirksville. Unloaded, it was of little concern. Loaded with the large wind turbine and equipment that filled the four trailers we immediately attracted attention. Mind you, we passed through around 4:30am, but they had a watch set for the nighttime hours.

"What's on the trucks?"

"A wind turbine so we can provide power for our town."

"Where might that be?"

"Licking. Don't worry we borrowed it from central Iowa. It's not big enough to provide much power, only about 75kw."

"Wouldn't it power Kirksville?"

"It wouldn't even power either of the colleges you have here."

"Gee, I don't know, maybe I'd better bump this up the chain of command."

"Suit yourself. Say what are you; you're not wearing a uniform?"

"Kirksville militia."

"And all they armed you with was a single shot shotgun?"

"Ammo is hard to come by."

"Are you familiar with the H&K USP Tactical?"

"What's that?"

“Here, let me show you.”

Pfutt, Pfutt.

“I think he lost interest, Hank.”

“Seems like, let’s get this show on the road before we have to make more demonstrations.”

The advantage of a suppressed .45ACP was the subsonic ammo and the suppressor H&K provided, strictly top of the line. First time I’d ever fired the H&K I’d borrowed from Stephanie just for this trip. Maybe she’d consider trading or selling it. On second thought, probably not, she’d chosen her firearms carefully and only had exactly what she felt she needed. I’d have to contend with borrowing it unless we could find another.

Stephanie suggested getting a threaded barrel for my PT1911 first and looking for a suppressor second. I told her thanks, but I needed a handgun that was ready to go without spending time looking all over for the barrel and suppressor and then hoping the suppressor worked on the pistol. Her next question was even more interesting. If she could come up with one, what would it be worth to me?

I asked if she was referring to my PT1911 or the H&K USP. She replied neither; what she had in mind was the H&K Mk 23 with an AWC Nexus II suppressor. I asked her how much and she said 1½ ounces of gold, minimum, it all depended. I all but dared her to find me one. She disappeared the next day and was gone for about 7 hours, but came home with a smile on her face. The next day she brought the threaded 6” barrel and the suppressor. The final price was two ounces of gold but she included 1,000-rounds of 230gr Speer Gold Dot. It was engraved *Mk23 USSOCOM*.

I had it on the range within an hour and it was worth the two ounces of gold it had cost. It was bulky and a bit on the heavy side, but that reduced the recoil. I didn’t know if the suppressor had a Nielsen device or not, but I didn’t care, it worked and worked well. She said she had extra baffles if I needed them although she doubted I would. She knew someone that carried H & K weapons and parts.

Meanwhile the fellas were up on the bluff trying to figure out where to pour the base for the tower. I suggested they pour it anywhere they wanted, who knew if the guy who owned the property was still alive? They decided that with the weight of the tower and turbine, their best bet was a base 10’x10’x10’. 1,000Ft<sup>3</sup> of concrete is 37 yards or about 3 truckloads, provided they could find large, 12-yard ready mix trucks.

Step one was digging the hole. That took them 4 days. Then they went to Rolla and got 3 12-yard trucks overloading them slightly. When the hole was filled, they screed it off and called it good. While we waited for the concrete to cure, we reassembled the tower and set it aside. Next, we built a small building to house the various controllers and inverters at the base of the bluff. We strung the wires down the face of the bluff in 6”

schedule 40 PVC pipe, and ran the power through the large inverter. Finally, we wired the inverter outlet into the ATSS each home had, filling the grid side for the first time.

Erecting the tower wasn't the hard part; the hard part was assembling the generator at the top of the tower, 88' off the ground. With that done, we installed the 3 turbine blades and locked them in place. We checked and rechecked the wiring and when it was pronounced good to go, we released the brake on the turbine. It slowly spun up to the standard rpm based on a 15mph wind and all of the gauges showed the system was producing electricity. The ATSS started switching to the grid position and the generators started to shut down, one after the other.

"Hot damn, we did it."

"Couldn't have done it without your excellent supervision Hank."

"This puts us just that much closer to being totally independent."

"When will we be independent?"

"When we can grow food outside and raise enough feed for the livestock."

"On 6 acres? Are you out of you mind?"

"Well, there is that abandoned farm down the road a bit, I thought we could use it. I was thinking maybe Harry and Stephanie might be willing to move there and keep an eye on things."

"Is that a good idea? Sally hasn't been gone that long."

"It will keep his mind off his troubles and Stephanie is who I'd want backing me up, if I had a choice. Harry and Sally each had a horse with tack so perhaps they can breed his mares and increase our horse herd. The farm has a hog house, a barn, a corn crib, a chicken house and a machine shed. We can supply all the fuel they will need. Harry is about 15 years older than Stephanie so I don't see them becoming romantically involved."

"How big is that farm?"

"One hundred sixty acres, a quarter section; it was one of those homesteads that came when Lincoln created the land grab back in 1862. A good portion of the LTS foods belonged to Harry and Sally, but most of them are in the cave and marked."

Our road dead ended at the farm down the road where I was suggesting Harry and Stephanie should go. I had raised it as a trial balloon to see if it would fly. The opinions were divided, maybe 50/50. Charles had talked it over with Anna and they decided to urge Stephanie to move. Lynn and I had Harry over for dinner and I brought it up. His



first impression wasn't positive. Then, I brought up the fact that Stephanie was a good shot, had her own guns, had her own horse, etc. I guess I wore him down, he finally said it would be up to her. However, he warned, he wasn't a farmer.

The twins had been raised on a farm and had farmed until they went bust. After, they got factory jobs, eventually losing those too. They agreed to help teach all of us what we needed to know and do to farm the 160 at the end of the road. Harry and Stephanie would take one M240 and an assortment of our ordnance to hold off attackers until we could come to the rescue. Of course, that would only happen if whoever was on guard duty was asleep on watch. It seemed to me that there was a famous story about a sentry falling asleep on watch that I couldn't remember. It involved Washington, Lincoln or one of our truly famous presidents.

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William Scott (c. 1839 or 1840-April 17, 1862) was a Union Army soldier during the American Civil War. He was the "Sleeping Sentinel" who was pardoned by Abraham Lincoln and memorialized by a poem and then a 1914 silent film.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC Washington, September 8.

Private William Scott, of Company K. of the Third regiment of Vermont volunteers, having been found guilty by court martial of sleeping on his post while a sentinel on picket guard, has been sentenced to be shot, and the sentence has been approved and ordered to be executed. The commanding officers of the brigade, the regiment and the company, of the command, together with many other privates and officers of his regiment, have earnestly appealed to the Major-General commanding, to spare the life of the offender, and the President of the United States has expressed a wish that as this is the first condemnation to death in this army for this crime, mercy may be extended to the criminal. This fact, viewed in connection with the inexperience of the condemned as a soldier, his previous good conduct and general good character, and the urgent entreaties made in his behalf, have determined the Major-General commanding to grant the pardon so earnestly prayed for. This act of clemency must not be understood as affording a precedent for any future case. The duty of a sentinel is of such a nature, that its neglect by sleeping upon or deserting his post may endanger the safety of a command, or even of the whole army, and all nations affix to the offence the penalty of death. Private William Scott of Co. K. of the Third regiment of Vermont volunteers, will be released from confinement and returned to duty.

By command of Maj. – General McClellan, S. WILLIAMS, Asst. Adjt.-General

*'Twas in the sultry summer-time, as war's red records show,  
When patriot armies rose to meet a fratricidal foe;  
When from the North, and East, and West, like the upheaving sea,  
Swept forth Columbia's sons, to make our country truly free.*

*Within a prison's dismal walls, where shadows veiled decay,  
In fetters, on a heap of straw, a youthful soldier lay;  
Heart-broken, hopeless, and forlorn, with short and feverish breath,  
He waited but the appointed hour to die a culprit's death.*

*Yet, but a few brief weeks before, untroubled with a care,  
He roamed at will, and freely drew his native mountain air;  
Where sparkling streams leap mossy rocks, from many a woodland font,  
And waving elms and grassy slopes give beauty to Vermont;*

*Where, dwelling in a humble cot, a tiller of the soil,  
Encircled by a mother's love, he shared a father's toil.  
Till, borne upon the wailing winds, his suffering country's cry  
Fired his young heart with fervent zeal, for her to live or die.*

*Then left he all; a few fond tears, by firmness half concealed,  
A blessing, and a parting prayer, and he was in the field.  
The field of strife, whose dews are blood, whose breezes war's hot breath,  
Whose fruits are garnered in the grave, whose husbandman is death!*

*Without a murmur he endured a service new and hard;  
But, wearied with a toilsome march, it chanced one night, on guard,  
He sank, exhausted, at his post, and the gray morning found  
His prostrate form, a sentinel asleep upon the ground!*

*But God is love - and finite minds can faintly comprehend  
How gentle Mercy, in His rule, may with stern Justice blend;  
And this poor soldier, seized and bound, found none to justify,  
While war's inexorable law decreed that he must die.*

*'Twas night. In a secluded room, with measured tread and slow,  
A statesman of commanding mien paced gravely to and fro.  
Oppressed, he pondered on a land by civil discord rent;  
On brothers armed in deadly strife: it was the President!*

*The woes of thirty millions filled his burdened heart with grief;  
Embattled hosts, on land and sea, acknowledged him their chief;  
And yet, amid the din of war, he heard the plaintive cry  
Of that poor soldier, as he lay in prison, doomed to die!*

*'Twas morning. On a tented field, and through the heated haze,  
Flashed back, from lines of burnished arms, the sun's effulgent blaze;  
While, from a somber prison house, seen slowly to emerge,  
A sad procession, o'er the sward, moved to a muffled dirge.*

*And in the midst, with faltering step, and pale and anxious face,*

*In manacles, between two guards, a soldier had his place.  
A youth, led out to die; and yet it was not death, but shame,  
That smote his gallant heart with dread, and shook his manly frame!*

*Still on, before the marshalled ranks, the train pursued its way,  
Up to the designated spot, whereon a coffin lay-  
His coffin! And, with reeling brain, despairing, desolate-  
He took his station by its side, abandoned to his fate!*

*Then came across his wavering sight strange pictures in the air:  
He saw his distant mountain home; he saw his parents there;  
He saw them bowed with hopeless grief, through fast declining years;  
He saw a nameless grave; and then, the vision closed-in tears!*

*Yet once again. In double file, advancing, then, he saw  
Twelve comrades, sternly set apart to execute the law-  
But saw no more; his senses swam-deep darkness settled round-  
And, shuddering, he awaited now the fatal volley's sound!*

*Then suddenly was heard the sounds of steeds and wheels approach,  
And, rolling through a cloud of dust, appeared a stately coach.  
On, past the guards, and through the field, its rapid course was bent,  
Till, halting, 'mid the lines was seen the nation's President!*

*He came to save that stricken soul, now waking from despair;  
And from a thousand voices rose a shout which rent the air!  
The pardoned soldier understood the tones of jubilee,  
And, bounding from his fetters, blessed the hand that made him free!*

*'Twas spring. Within a verdant vale, where Warwick's crystal tide  
Reflected, o'er its peaceful breast, fair fields on either side;  
Where birds and flowers combined to cheer a sylvan solitude,  
Two threatening armies, face to face, in fierce defiance stood!*

*Two threatening armies! One invoked by injured Liberty-  
Which bore above its patriot ranks the symbol of the Free;  
And one, a rebel horde, beneath a flaunting flag of bars,  
A fragment, torn by traitorous hands from Freedom's Stripes and Stars!*

*A sudden burst of smoke and flame, from many a thundering gun,  
Proclaimed, along the echoing hills, the conflict had begun;  
While shot and shell athwart the stream with fiendish fury sped,  
To strew among the living lines the dying and the dead!*

*Then, louder than the roaring storm, pealed forth the stern command,  
"Charge, soldiers, charge!" and, at the word, with shouts, a fearless band,*

*Two hundred heroes from Vermont, rushed onward, through the flood,  
And upward, o'er the rising ground, they marked their way in blood!*

*The smitten foe before them fled, in terror, from his post-  
While, unsustained, two hundred stood, to battle with a host!  
Then, turning, as the rallying ranks, with murderous fire replied,  
They bore the fallen o'er the field, and through the purple tide!*

*The fallen! And the first who fell in that unequal strife  
Was he whom Mercy sped to save when Justice claimed his life-  
The pardoned soldier! And, while yet the conflict raged around-  
While yet his life-blood ebbed away through every gaping wound-*

*While yet his voice grew tremulous, and death bedimmed his eye-  
He called his comrades to attest he had not feared to die!  
And, in his last expiring breath, a prayer to heaven was sent,  
That God, with his unfailling grace, would bless our President!*

The old farm had a wood/coal furnace and used propane for the stove and hot water heater. We could fill the propane tank, move a few cords of firewood and even look around for coal for greater efficiency. The 500-gallon farm tank was half full of gas and we added some PRI-G and topped it off with stabilized gasoline. Next, we moved a fair amount of food and their personal possessions. Harry said he'd leave the trailer for our use, just in case. We also moved the propane fueled generator and hooked it in.

The gals cleaned the house like they were getting it ready to put on the market; it was so clean, it squeaked. The bedding was washed and the beds made up in all three bedrooms, two smaller rooms for Harry and Stephanie and the master bedrooms just in case they had guests. Canned foods in the basement were organized and dated and none of the lids bulged so we tried a couple of jars. Tasted good and nobody got sick although the potatoes stored had to be disposed of because they were past due. Another scavenging trip resulted in rounding up a few free ranging cattle. They were gaunt, apparently having had trouble finding enough to eat. We moved chickens, a bred sow and 3 feeder hogs so they could begin refilling the cleaned out freezer. Any skills the two them lacked were available from within the MAG. I sure hated to see the Barrett go and that gave me an idea.

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“Anyone know where Murfreesboro, Tennessee is?”

“Same place it's always been? What do you want a Barrett rifle?”

“Harry took his with him. I fired it several times and really liked it. I don't know anywhere else to find one.”

## The Other Shoe – Chapter 14

“So you want to make a trip to Tennessee?”

“If we could, yes. It’s more of a want than a need because in times of trouble Harry has his.”

“Do you have any idea how far it is?”

“I looked it up in my Rand McNally and it is around 450 miles or a little less. We might need to skirt Nashville because it took a hit. Otherwise, we should have clear sailing.”

“There is no sense in going there for a single rifle, I’ll see if anyone else wants one.”

“Thanks Frank, I appreciate it.”

“I’ve got the list, 4 people want the rifle, you, Stephanie, and the twins. We’ll get six rifles, spare parts and 100 10-round magazines plus all of the .50-caliber ammo available. I understand that Harry has some Mk 211?”

“He only bought 4 cans of 120-round. If we could find more, it would be ideal.”

“Where did he get it?”

“From some Sergeant stationed at Fort Leonard Wood.”

“Oh, local, huh? We’ll have to look around. We could use anywhere from 50 to 100 cans.”

“I wonder if they’d have that much. The stuff costs the government \$900 a can.”

“They must have some; we’ll try and find whatever they have. You should know by now that the government only cuts costs by screwing the troops, not by purchasing practical quantities of things they use.”

“You have a point; we got LAW rockets from the Missouri National Guard. The Army replaced the LAW with the M136 AT-4 20 years ago. Probably some supply Sergeant who couldn’t stand to part with them in case they were needed in some future conflict.”

“Is the Mk 211 imported or made in the US?”

“It’s made under license by Winchester, but I have no idea where.”

“You want to leave tomorrow and plan on a long day trip or an overnigher?”

“Whatever it takes. Tomorrow is fine with me. My Chevy is rather nondescript, let’s take it.”

“I’ll fill 10-cans with diesel and you top off your truck. Let me borrow your atlas and I look for alternative routes.”

“Lynn, Frank and I are leaving tomorrow on a little trip. It’s about 450 miles one-way so we may make it an overnight trip. We’ll be back sometime the next day if everything goes as expected.”

“Oh? Where are you going?”

“Murfreesboro, Tennessee to the Barrett factory.”

“Boys and their toys! Harry only moved down the road two miles, can’t you borrow his when you want to make a lot of noise?”

“I could I suppose. However, I rather suspect that should I need it, Harry will already be using it.”

“You scare me sometimes. You often sound like an Army Battalion is going to attack us.”

“Would you rather have it and not need it?”

“Been there, done that, got the T-shirt. If you’re going to go, just go. Be careful; I’d like you back intact and still breathing. No bullet holes allowed.”

“Thanks dear. I’ve got to run over to Harry’s and find out something. I won’t be gone long.”

“Harry, are you settled in?”

“Yep and she plays cribbage. What’s up?”

“The Mk 211 MP you bought.”

“What about it?”

“Was that Sergeant from Fort Leonard Wood?”

“I didn’t ask, but I’m pretty sure he was. Why?”

“Frank and I are going to the Barrett factory in Tennessee to pick up more rifles. I doubt they carry Mk 211.”

“You want me to go over to the Fort and have a look see?”

“We’d need anywhere from 50 to 100 cans, if they have it.”

“Well, I’ll take Stephanie with me to cover my back. She did the full twenty years and may have a few ideas where to look. If they have more than 100 cans, do you want us to take it all?”

“Maybe you’d better. I’d rather be shooting it at them than have someone shooting it at me. I’m hoping we can find a group of rifles that were packed up waiting to be shipped to the Army. That way, we’d be sure they were the M107s.”

“Good luck. When are you leaving?”

“Before dawn tomorrow. It will either be a very long day trip or an overnigher.”

“Say, we have a porker and a beef ready to butcher. Could you ask whoever to come over and give us a hand?”

“Can do. I’ll check with you when we get back, Stephanie wanted one of the rifles.”

“Figures; she gives a whole new meaning to the term ‘gun nut’. Man. You ought to see her ride; she moves her stallion with knee pressure alone when she wants to. I frankly surprised she hadn’t latched onto a man.”

“I understand she dated some.”

“She said she sometimes had two or more boyfriends at the same time. Then, she laughed and said variety is the spice of life. She just had her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday and I think she’s beginning to realize that she doesn’t have anyone permanent in her life. She is quite the gal.”

“Do I detect some interest on your part?”

“Sally isn’t cold in her grave yet. Maybe someday, but not right now.”

Harry had a faraway look in his eyes, sort of like he wanted to say more, but I let it go at that. With Stephanie helping, he’d get the Raufoss if there was any to be had. The Fort was used primarily for training and who knew what they had. Unless I’m wrong, they did AIT there.

We were on the road by 4:30 the next morning, to beat the rush hour traffic. We didn’t even see any traffic until we got to Paducah and that was a lone vehicle. We kept a watchful eye all the way to Murfreesboro and didn’t see another human being. That didn’t mean we hadn’t been seen, just that we hadn’t seen them.

There were 12 rifles in the shipping department all addressed to the DoD. We took those, spare magazines, drag bags, M-33 ammo and an assortment of spare parts. We weren't sure what wore out first so the parts assortment was fairly large. I even took one of their rifles in the .416 caliber to give to Stephanie. It was a model 99 single shot that was supposed to have better ballistics than the .50-caliber rifle. And, to be certain I could silence one, I took a model 95 with a Nightforce scope w/BORS. We spent about two hours going through the factory and loading up our haul. And then, we moved off about 30 miles before we stopped and had an MRE for lunch.

We drove on through and made it home just before midnight. I pulled the Chevy in the shed and went in to see if Lynn had left me any leftovers. She was up, having heard us drive in. I had a sandwich and gave her the high points of our trip. She wanted to know about Nashville and I had to tell we took a different route to avoid any lingering fallout. I explained that we brought back 14 rifles, 12 M107s, 1 model 99 for Stephanie so she could experiment with the new .416 cartridge and a model 95 for me. We did well on ammo bringing back 150 cases of .50-caliber (12,000-rounds) and 50 cases (4,000-rounds) of .416-caliber.

I also explained that Harry said Stephanie and he had planned to go to the Fort to look for more Mk 211. She said that explained his call. All he'd said was 125 cases and that I'd know what he meant. I sure did 15,000 rounds of ammo worth around \$112,500. When I told her, she gasp and then asked what dollar figure I put on this latest adventure.

"Well, figure 144 grand on 12 rifles, 9 grand each on the other two, and 350 bucks times 200. I guess that's nearly 232 grand in Tennessee. Harry's take was about 108 grand for a grand total of 340 thousand. And, we didn't corner the market at Barrett; we just picked up a prepackaged DoD order and some spares. You want to go over to Harry's tomorrow morning?"

"I would like to see the expression on her face when you turn over her share of the haul. Are you done gallivanting around the country for a while?"

"Until I think of something else we need, yes."

"One of these days, this salvage work is going to turn around and bite you square on the butt. I'll come visit if the prison isn't too far away.

"I think I have gotten back every penny of taxes we've paid. Now, the only question is, 'Who will show up first, the MZBs or the JBTs'?"

"I think we'll take all those loose .50-caliber links and make up a half dozen belts of Mk 211. We don't have a linker, but we might be able to come up with one at the Fort, even if all it is that manual belt loader John Moses Browning came up with."

"How are the kids?"



“Lynette is potty trained, but Mark is being a stinker about it. I’ll be so glad when all four of them are in training pants.”

“Three down and one to go, you’re getting to be an expert.”

“Yeah and the stretch marks are disappearing.”

“Time for another pair?”

“No, thank you.”

We crawled in bed and I was out like a light, it had been a long day. The morning came way too early, but I got up, showered and dressed. There was leftover pancake batter so I started my breakfast.

“Sit down, I’ll finish that. How hungry are you?”

“Finish off the batter.”

“We’re down to homemade maple flavored syrup, is that ok?”

“Sure.”

“You eat and I get someone to watch the kids while we go to Harry’s and Stephanie’s.”

“I’ll only be a few minutes. The syrup is very good.”

She grabbed her coat and took off. She got Jeb’s wife, Janet, since she only had one of her own. We unloaded most of the guns, ammo and accessories and headed down the road. Stephanie was pleased with the M107 and awestruck with the model 99. We unloaded M-33 for her plus the .416 ammo and loaded up the Mk 211. After we returned home, we called a meeting and passed out the rifles and ammo plus the accessories. A couple of fellas complained they wished they had asked for one and we filled their wishes from our supply of extra rifles. Not much got done that day besides sighting in the rifles and practice at various ranges.

“Bring ‘em on, we’re ready.”

“Be careful what you wish for, God has a sense of humor.”

Within a week we had our first visitors and they came in numbers.

“We have the Missouri National Guard down here wanting to speak to whoever is in charge.”

“I’ll get Frank and we’ll be right there. Lynn, get on the radio and give Harry a heads up.”

“Are you in charge here?”

“I own the property, all six acres of it. You could say that Frank and I are in charge. What can we do for you?”

“You had any trouble?”

“What do you mean, attacks by roving gangs?”

“Yes, they’ve been active in the area.”

“Nary a one, Sergeant.”

“Where’d you come up with the machineguns?”

“Courtesy of the US Army. Where have you been the last two years?”

“Getting reorganized. What’s your food situation?”

“We have just enough to get by and raise fresh foods in our greenhouse.”

“We’re under orders to confiscate anything over a 30-day supply.”

“You’d be lucky to find that much food among us. We have livestock but only a little and none of it is ready to butcher. One of our group, Harry, took over the abandoned farm down the road. Come spring we intend to help him get in a crop to produce livestock feed. We’ve been supplement our meat supply with wild game. A large deer doesn’t go far when you’re dividing it among several families.”

“You don’t look like you’ve missed many meals. Not like most of the others we’ve found.”

“We were prepared to some extent for any kind of disaster. We have done limited salvage when necessary.”

“Looting?”

“Salvaging; the property was abandoned.”

“Sez you.”

“Ask around, we’ll all tell the same story, salvage. It was mostly fuel for our stoves and generators.”

“I guess we’d better check down the road.”

“I’ll come with you; Harry and Stephanie both have Barrett rifles and hair triggers. I can’t say what they might do when you pull into sight.”

“Two people? No sweat.”

“One is a former ranger and the other retired after 20 years in the Army. She’s quite the gun collector and is good with every weapon she owns. Your best bet would be to tie a white flag on your antenna.”

“We kind of figured you hillbillies would be trouble.”

“I beg your pardon? I hail from St. Louis and only moved down here when the economy went belly up. Frank’s group came here from Jefferson City, after the war. We banded together for security reasons.”

“Sez you.”

“I’m starting to very much dislike you Sergeant. I don’t think I’ll go with you to Harry and Stephanie’s. You deserve whatever you get. You might be surprised how well we’re prepared to repel boarders, be they mutant zombie bikes or jack bootied thugs.”

“We’re just following orders.”

“The Eichmann defense didn’t work the last time, the Israelis hung him. You might want to check those orders, Sergeant. We’re all veterans of one war or another and we didn’t put our lives on line so you could behave as you are.”

“Let me guess, you were a jarhead.”

“I was a Marine and did my tour in Iraqi; more than one actually. Most of our force is former Special Forces of one type or another. Our security chief is a former SEAL who did a tour in Iraq and more than one in Afghanistan. As you know, the marksmanship of the soldiers is ranked based on their skill: marksman-sharpshooter-expert. We all qualify as Experts or better. Most of us meet the civilian standard for Expert which is roughly equivalent to a military sniper rating. Don’t mess with us Sergeant and we won’t mess with you. Tell that to your Lieutenant.”

“We’ll see about that mister.”

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We followed the three Hummer convoy down to Harry’s and had them boxed in if they started trouble. Stephanie was wearing her ACUs with her collar rank insignia and that backed the Sergeant down very quickly, she was an E-9 and booked no shit from a 25

year old E-5. Harry told me he'd seen her dress uniform and she had seven rows of ribbons and a Combat Infantryman Badge, with three stars. Certain badges are allowed on the ACU. The three stars represented 4 conflicts, Panama, Southwest Asia, Somalia and the War on Terror.

In our group, having a combat infantry badge, or the equivalent, wasn't uncommon. Neither were having one and sometimes two stars. We were fairly long on combat experience and most hadn't forgotten lessons learned the hard way. While it was true that we hadn't taken body armor as salvage, that was easily remedied because we weren't that far from Leonard Wood. It would mean taking each person up there and specifically fitting the armor, something easily accomplished before the Guard returned.

With that in mind, we drove over two couples at a time and got the Interceptor plus spare plates. Our haul didn't begin to approach our recent weapons and ammo haul, but it seemed to be very important, given that Sergeant's attitude. Harry and Stephanie also went the first day with Lynn and me, Frank and Shirley. The last ones to go were David and his wife. Also with the Sergeant's attitude in mind, we went ahead and loaded 6 belts with Mk 211, alternating between Mk 211, AP and APIT or API-DT. Every APIT/API-DT round was followed with an Mk 211 round, making the belts longer at 120 rounds.

We added a third M240 so we had 2 Ma Deuces and 2 M240s at our place. The M240s went down by the road and the Ma Deuces higher up, in front of the berm. The 7.62 belts were 4 rounds of M993 and one M62 or one M276. You might say the difference between the two was day and night. These belts were stock right out of the ammo can. Since we had acquired night vision, dim tracers were necessary if we were firing the weapons wearing night vision. It was the AN/PVS-14 and could be helmet mounted, hand held or rifle mounted. Let me explain how that happened.

"Man, was that close."

"What happened?"

"We weren't three miles down the road when we ran into a convoy, Missouri National Guard. It was probably that same bunch who came here last week raising hell. They had maybe three dozen school busses, the big ones, packed to overflowing with civilians. I suspect they're going to start a refuge center there. We couldn't really get a good look, but Mary said they didn't look too happy."

"Those writers, Fleataxi, TOM and Jerry D Young, among others, suggested something like that might happen."

"The next question becomes where they're going to get the food to feed them."

"Well, they're not getting it from us, count on it."

"It's going to be difficult to stop them, especially if they turn up with a couple of Companies of grunts. I picked up another M240 and more ammo. We can put two .50-caliber and two .30-caliber guns here and let Harry keep the one he has. Once they start checking the inventory of ordnance Leonard Wood is supposed to have against what's left, I expect they'll be back."

"Do you have any good ideas of how to deal with a force that large?"

"First off, they're weekend warriors while most of us have some kind of Special Forces background. Second, we extremely well-armed, more than I thought we'd ever need. Third, rather than waiting for them to bring the fight to us, we can take the fight to them and dictate our own terms. We need to get scouts out immediately equipped with radios that will reach from the Fort back here."

"We've used 20-meters with good success, want to continue with that?"

"As long as we change the frequency every 4 hours it might work. How about Harry and you start the ball rolling and I'll get everything organized here? Use 14.175mhz."

"I'm going with my Super Match and my Mk-23. There's no point in announcing our presence."

"Does Harry have a suppressor?"

"He can borrow Stephanie's USP Tactical and use his M1A with the Surefire suppressor."

"How do you think it would work out if each team had a woman and a man?"

"If there's any jealousy involved, that might be a bad idea, unless you use husband wife teams."

"I can't do that, if they get caught, that could level the children with no parents."

"Figure out something, I know that Lynn and I will team up since we seem to have an odd number of people, 8 men and 7 women. I'm also willing to pull twice as many tours as the others, if that will help."

"What do you have for optics?"

"I have a very good pair of binoculars and an 80 power spotting scope. Harry has some things along the same lines, I think."

"Remember to take your night vision. You probably won't need it presuming the Fort is well lighted, but..."

"I'll square it Lynn and call Harry and tell him what to get around. He and I generally use the CB on channel 31."

"It sure would be nice if we had SINCGARS and some of those handhelds that they're using now. Last I heard, it was a battle among several bidders for the contract. I think that ITT Industries had the edge."

"I read about those, they're called Spearheads. They use the same frequency hopping scheme as the SINCGARS and only weigh a little over 19 ounces."

"What's the battery life?"

"About 8 hours and they're rechargeable. If I recall correctly, they have a choice of combination earphones/microphones."

"I'll tell you Hank, if we had SINCGARS for all of our vehicles and homes plus Spearheads for operations, we'd be in pretty good shape."

"ITT is headquartered in Indiana, but I don't know where they make the radios."

"Why is it Hank that you seem to be so well informed?"

"When I lived in St. James, I spent hours on the internet every night. After I moved, I began to go to the library in Licking trying to keep up to date. I'm an encyclopedia of useless facts."

"I can't say I agree, you're better prepared than we were."

"I was single when I moved down here. I met Lynn and the rest, as they say, is history."

"You know sometimes only Congress and the Services know about the latest developments. The last I knew they were working on the JTRS. Phase V of that program was for a small handheld radio. Maybe they fielded one that we don't know about."

"I think I read that they killed JTRS."

"I'm just afraid that it means SINCGARS then."

"You figure out where to get them and Harry and I will go shopping. Funny thing about the SINCGARS is it required 28 volts except for the man pack that uses 12 volts. If we get SINCGARS, we'll get the man packs and Spearheads if we can find them. We'd need 2 or 3 batteries per handheld to be sure we always had a battery charged. Someone else will have to install them and set them up. We'll get the CD that's available for programming the frequency hopping."

o

“You ready?”

“I guess so, what are you taking to eat?”

“MREs.”

“Give me a minute and I’ll grab a box. Did you put in a 5-gallon can of water?”

“Yes and both of my canteens are full. Besides, my BOB has a Katadyn filter.”

“I suppose you went top of the line, right?”

“I always do when it’s a question of life or death.”

“How close are you planning to get?”

“No closer than necessary to find out what we need to know. Our primary task is to determine if the rescued people are being helped or locked up behind barbed wire.”

“And, if they are?”

“Let’s take one thing at a time. First we get the facts and then we make the decision.”

“You know for a hermit, you’re on the go 25 hours a day; it just doesn’t fit the image I first had of you.”

“Well, like Gomer always said, *surprise, surprise, surprise.*”

We took off up M until it turned into J and from there picked up I-44 at Powellville. We got off I-44 just past St. Robert at the Gospel Ridge exit and took off cross country until we came to the Fort. We looked around until we found a good observation spot and set up a light/cold camp. We checked our weapons one last time and took turns observing with the binoculars and the spotting scope. We really didn’t see much until dark when they turned on the lights to the internment camp. It had a wire 10’ in we assumed was the do not pass line. The concertina on top of the fence was turned inward. We saw a mess hall, toilets and presumably showers.

We knocked off for the night and resumed observing the following morning. I noticed right off that no one went to the mess hall for breakfast. The first meal served was lunch and as nearly as we could see, it was a sandwich and a bottle of water. We continued to observe and the residents returned to the mess hall around 5:30 and lined up waiting to be fed. We couldn’t see what they were given, but it was a sit down meal; a very brief sit down meal. Our replacements showed up and we directed them to our lookout position on 20-meters. We covered what we’d seen and made sure they had identified the compound.

“Ok, what did you see?”

“They have a compound with a 10’ trip wire and 8 or 9’ high cyclone fence topped by concertina turned inward. We saw toilets and showers plus a mess hall. They didn’t get breakfast, had a sandwich and bottle of something, probably water, for lunch and a sit down supper that reminded me of boot camp where you only were given a few minutes to eat.”

“No rough treatment or anything?”

“Not that we saw. There are a lot of tents set up and I think the place could hold somewhere between 1,200 and 1,600 depending on the capacity of the tents. I counted and there were 100 tents.”

“Guards?”

“They were armed plus there were machineguns in the towers at the four corners. The one thing we didn’t see was chimneys coming out of the tents.”

“So they don’t have heat? I’ve got our comms guy out looking for radios. He didn’t seem to think it would be much of a problem. I think he’s planning on breaking in a couple of Guard Armories for the SINCGARS and look around for the Spearheads. We have a list of Missouri Armories and he’ll quit just as soon as he has what we need.”

“What about that compound?”

“For now we just keep on watching. If they’re up to no good, we’ll know that soon enough. Would you do otherwise based on the information you just brought back?”

“No, I suppose not.”

“Let’s just get those radios and install them. For all we know, they have scanners monitoring the CB bands and the ham bands.”

So, we watched as the compound began to fill. We now had the radios and they’d all been installed. Radios installed in home were powered with power supplies and a six frequency skipping setups were programmed into all of the radios. The Spearhead was limited to six frequency skipping options which we labeled Tac-1 through Tac-6. As the compound continued to fill, our level of concern increased.

For one thing, the size of the food shipments hadn’t changed with the population. While convoys of troopers were out rounding up more strays, a small force was left in place to hover over the compound. That varied from 2-3 squads up to a full Platoon, in this case a force of about 50. We concluded that this wasn’t the only camp, we’d seen or heard of larger group of people than the number in the camp. A sign was erected and we as-



sumed it said something like Stalag Luft #. However, it actually said Relocation Camp MO-9. A rose by any other name...

Back at that acreage, David said he blew it when the berm was built. If we had four people in front of the berm with the machineguns, there would be no way for them to get behind the berm without exposing themselves to the attacker. Plus, he said, you don't just pick up a M2 and carry it around like a M240. He said the only solution he could think of was placing the machineguns on the berm, constructing fighting positions that were open from the rear. He went on to say we could put the heavy machineguns at the top of the bluff, but that had problems too.

Relocation Camp MO-9? The MO could stand for Missouri. If this was camp 9, where were 1 through 8 and how many more camps were there beyond the nine? It wouldn't be the first time someone skipped a few numbers to mislead the opposition. The thought was there although I couldn't come up with an example. Something military was my nagging thought. Was it the way they numbered SEAL teams? You know how it goes; you get a thought and can't remember the answer. It drives you nuts until you remember and by then, it doesn't matter.

The solution to the machinegun problem was easier than figuring out what was going on at Leonard Wood. The machineguns we moved to the top of the berm with an open fighting position allowing exit to the housing and cave. We had that done in no time flat and it was well that we did, the Guard came back, looking for their machineguns.

"Got a warrant?"

"We're under martial law, we don't need a warrant."

"You may not, but I do. Anyway, what makes you think that they're your machineguns?"

"Where else would you get them?"

"From a class III dealer? Damn heavy price tag if you ask me."

"And of course you have ownership papers?"

"Sure do but they're in the safe in my basement at our house in Licking."

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The M240 was originally the FN MAG developed during the 1950s. The US got around to using them in the late 1960s to early 1970s. Any imports that predated the Firearms Control Act and the Firearms Owners Protection Act were legal to own if you had the BATF stamp. Martial law or not, we had decided, as a group, that no one was going to violate our rights under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. Besides, the John Warner Act that gave the

President authority to ignore Posse Comitatus during a national emergency had been repealed. It boiled down to who had the biggest guns.

o

“Step aside, we’re going to search.”

“No, I don’t believe you are. If I raise my hand like this,” I said raising my right hand, “when I drop it they’ll open fire. Hurry up and decide, my hand is getting heavy.”

“What are we up against?”

“A whole lot more than 4 machineguns, I promise. We Marines always had a special place in our hearts for the M-72.”

“You mean the LAW rocket? “

“Light Anti-tank Weapon, 66mm, stationary target range 200 meters, moving target range 165 meters. Unlike the National Guard, Special Operators use whatever is available with spectacular success.”

“This is above my pay grade; I’ll be back with either my Squad Commander or Platoon Commander.”

“You can reach us via CB radio on channel 9. Call ahead and we’ll be ready.”

“That went well.”

“Not really David, I believe that Sergeant will be back. Listen, I have an idea, how about we get the women and children into the cave for a few days? When they’re secure and we’ve taken precautions to protect our possessions, we use their return to cover an attack on Stalag 9 and set the inmates free?”

The Germans had several names for prisoner of war camps, among them the slang term Stalag. In Germany, Stalag was a term used for POW camps. Stalag is an abbreviation for "Stammlager", itself a short form of the full name "Mannschaftsstamm und -straflager". The types of POW camps were:

- Dulag or Durchgangslager (transit camp) – These camps served as a collection point for POWs prior to reassignment.
- Stalag or Stammlager (base camp) – These were enlisted personnel POW camps.
- Oflag or Offizier-Lager (officer camp) – These were POW camps for officers.
- Stalag Luft or Luftwaffe-Stammlager (Luftwaffe base camp) – These were POW camps administered by the German Air Force for Allied aircrews.
- Marlag or Marine-Lager (marine camp) – These were Navy personnel POW camps.

- Milag or Marine-Internierten-Lager (marine internment camp) – These were merchant seamen internment camps.
- Ilag/Jlagl or Internierungslager (internment camp) – These were civilian internment camps.

In the US during WW II, we called them war relocation camps or pow camps. The former held Japanese American citizens and the latter, German pows. You've got to watch those Executive Orders, like EO 9066. The difference between Theodore and Franklin was simple. Teddy said Bully and Franklin was a Bully.

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The approach to taking down the camps couldn't have been more simple, which is good because none of us were officers. We take 8 LAW rockets, one for each tower and a spare. We'd use silenced sniper rifles, mostly M1As, sighted in using Black Hills 168gr or 175gr BTHP. We could get close enough that terrain wouldn't be a problem. Concurrently with taking out the 4 towers, we'd take out the guards at the main gate. *After that it would just a matter of mopping up Jap positions and...* wait, that's a line out of *In Harm's Way*, uttered by Captain Eddington.

"Is this going to work?"

"It's one hell of a time to be asking that question, it has to work. We're taking all 8 men and Stephanie. It would be easy; we'll only be outnumbered about 5 to 1. We'll be firing from the dark and using those superior flashhiders. They won't know where to look. As soon as the 4 towers are down, the rocket men will join the snipers and pick off any remaining guardsmen."

"I never thought I'd live to see the day we'd be shooting our own troops."

"No one did. That's just it; they're not acting like our own troops and deserve a wakeup call."

"Base Camp, LWFO (Leonard Wood Forward Observer)."

"Go LWFO."

"I have a convoy pulling out with about 2/3 of the military personal. It appears that they're on a mission."

"Roger LWFO. We'll be on our way in five minutes. We should arrive just about dark."

"Lynn, it's time for you and the others to get into the cave and lock it down. If everything goes as expected, we'll be back in two hours. Who knows, we might catch the Guard ransacking the place and be forced to stop them."

“You be careful.”

“We will be. If we can make good use of our tactical advantage, we could walk away without a scratch and the people would be free.”

“Where will they go?”

“Beats me but I don’t believe they’ll stick around very long.”

There was only one good way to get from the acreage to Ft. Leonard Wood, the one I described earlier. With that in mind, we took off like a bat out of hell, and made it about halfway to the Fort before we parked off the road and waited. When the convoy of 3 HEMTTs had passed, we took off again, just as fast, until we were close to our forward observation point. The sun was setting and we could begin to see stars in the nighttime sky. With no further ado, we moved out placing our rocketeers first, followed by those of us who would be sniping.

It is said that no plan survives first contact with the enemy. If you plan well, you take that into consideration and have backup or alternative solutions. The LAW rockets must have been old, all four fired but one failed to explode. The rocketeer switched to his backup (spare) rocket and took down the last tower. The guards in that tower were well aware that they were in someone’s sights and were climbing down as fast as they could. The second rocket helped them along, collapsing on them. It was now our turn and we opened up on the gate guards.

Unfortunately, they weren’t complete idiots, when the first 3 towers fell, they took cover. We took out as many as we could with the first rocket volley. Some changed positions when the fourth tower fell and they fell around the same time. Within the compound the remaining force consisting of about 3 squads sought cover in the mess hall.

“We need all remaining rockets fired into the mess hall.”

“What about the people in there?”

“It’s well after dinner time; the only people in there should be the guards.”

The 3 remaining rockets slammed into the building having less effect than anticipated. It did drive out some of the soldiers, whom we dispatched, but most stayed where they were. Two of our number went to the only gate and opened it wide and then began urging the internees to leave. There was a mixed reaction. Those people who hadn’t wanted to be in the camp in the first place, grabbed their possessions and boogied. Some of those that thought the government’s reason to be was to protect them and had figured out it wasn’t true soon followed.

But, there will always be some who can’t find their butt without a map and would starve to death without the government hand out. They simply milled around asking what we

wanted them to do. Any authority figure in a storm? We had more pressing problems, we needed to clear out the mess hall and we needed to get home and try to pick up the pieces. With our rockets gone we turned to the next most powerful ordnance available, Mk3A2 concussion grenades and M67 fragmentation grenades. What we needed was some of those 40mm grenades. It was a case of wish in one hand and spit in the other, we didn't have them. Oh, we saw them, but weren't too keen on the M16 rifles and the only ones I had were the 4 M4s that were put up for the kids.

"The grenades didn't work. Now what?"

"I vote we leave. The only people hanging around are a bunch of sheeple who are afraid of losing their meal ticket."

"Let ask the others and I'll let majority rule."

David polled the other seven of our small force and the vote was surprisingly in favor of leaving and getting back to our families before the soldiers discovered the cave. We saddled up and headed down the road, our fingers crossed that the dark was working to the advantage of our families by hiding the cave. If those troops had demolitions, the blast door might not keep them out.

"I don't see any HEMTTs, have they been here?"

I'll call Lynn on the radio and find out. Lynn, this is Hank, we're back. Are you still safe in the cave?"

"Oh it's you; I thought maybe it was them."

"They haven't been here?"

"No, they haven't."

"Oh, oh. We did what we needed at the camp and hurried back just in case you needed help. Did you hear what she said?"

"She said here comes trouble. Shhh, I hear something out in the woods and it doesn't sound like a herd of deer."

"What does it sound like?"

"Missouri Jacka...., uh mules. I'd say about 3-4 squads of guys with two left feet each. We need more rockets, grenades and loaded magazines."

"Try the ice house."

"What are they doing there?"

“The ice all melted and I was going to convert it to a smoke house and then I...never mind, get what you need from the ice house.”

Not everyone used the M1A rifle, no, that would have been too easy. Some like the FAL and others preferred the HK91. The magazines weren't interchangeable. A 7.62x51mm cartridge was a 7.62x51mm cartridge and they worked equally well in all three of the firearms. The most popular type of magazine in modern rifles and handguns, a box magazine, stores cartridges in a column, either one above the other or staggered zigzag fashion. This zigzag stack is often identified by the misnomer double-column when in fact, it is a single, staggered column. As the firearm cycles, cartridges are moved to the top of the magazine via spring tension to either a single feed position or side-by-side feed positions. Box magazines may be integral to the firearm or removable.

A detachable box magazine is a self-contained mechanism capable of being loaded or unloaded while detached from the host firearm. They are attached via a slot in the firearm receiver usually below the action but occasionally to the side or on top. When the magazine is empty, it can be detached from the firearm and replaced by another full magazine. This significantly speeds the process of reloading, allowing the operator quick access to ammunition. This type of magazine may be straight or curved, the curve being necessary if the rifle uses rimmed ammunition or ammunition with a tapered case. Box magazines are often affixed to each other with clips, tape, straps, or otherwise, for quicker access.

Wait, I'm not done. A STANAG magazine is a type of detachable firearm magazine standardized by NATO in October 1980. It doesn't apply to FAL, HK91 or M1A rifles. The listed rifles there all shoot poodles, lots of different flavors though. And those that have the direct gas impingement system can be cleaned with carburetor cleaner. Wet it down and let it soak, repeat until it is down to bare metal. Starting a combat patrol with clean rifle means your M16/M4 will be good for the standard load out of 210 rounds. If you soak it with Breakfree CLP, you can stretch it an additional 90 rounds or three magazines. If you still have ammo left and you don't have much choice, a second soaking may or may not help. In the latter days of Iraqi Freedom, the insurgents began using snipers. If you could spot him, a belt of .50-caliber usually solved the problem. Usually.

When I left on this attack I was loaded down with 1 magazine in my rifle, 8 more in my Tac Force chest vest and another 8 in musette bag. I restocked my grenades and passed out more as our people came looking for rockets, grenades and loaded magazines. Those using magazines other than M1A magazines were given bandoleers holding 60-rounds (two per pocket) on 5-round stripper clips. The only grenades passed out were M67 defensive grenades and we limited everyone to 3 rockets. The 4 machineguns were retrieved from the ladies in the cave and placed in their tripods on the backside of the berm.

“This is the Missouri National Guard. You're surrounded. Lay down your guns and step away.”

“Molōn labe!”

“You think they’ll understand what you said?”

“Do you want me to repeat it in English? Okay. Listen up out there, what I just said means *Come and take them*. It was spoken by King Leonidas of Sparta to Xerxes of Persia around 480BC. It was basically repeated by Colonel William Travis to General Santa Anna in 1836 at the Battle of the Alamo. Leonidas and Travis lost but they weren’t Special Forces Operators.”

“I didn’t know about Travis saying that at the Alamo.”

“He may not have used the words, but actions speak louder than words. They only have three squads; the odds are in our favor.”

“How do you figure?”

“We’re defending our homes and those good ol’ boys are just following orders. The main thing we have to do is keep them from finding the cave. I know Lynn and that means that our wives and teenagers are armed. They’re sort of hampered by being in the cave. One demolition charge and they could be finished.”

“What’s in the fifties?”

“One tracer, one Mk211 and three AP; the belts are longer than normal because of the Mk211 rounds and each belt holds 120 rounds.”

“Shit, you’re loaded for bear.”

“It was never if, just when. I expected MZBs but we got JBTs.”

“What are the ROE?”

“Screw ROE.”

“Last chance, lay down you guns and step away.”

“Pry them from our cold dead hands soldier boy.”

They either had a DM or a sniper, a shot rang out and Harry grunted, “I’m hit.” The shooter must have hurried his/her shot or was new to the sniping business. That changed the odds so we located the Guard troops, they were down by the creek, and replied in kind, using head shots only. That cut their number by 8. Harry didn’t shoot back and someone missed.

Even with our taking 1 to their 8, we couldn't afford this, especially if someone missed. "Take your time, be sure of you target and aim for head shots only, they're probably wearing body armor."

"It's me, Harry. They don't know about our body armor 'cause I took one straight to the plate. Sum Beech that hurts."

"Cut the chatter and let's take them out."

Those good ol' boys mistook concealment for cover. Second, they didn't know about our having body armor. Finally, they didn't know what loads we had in the Ma Deuces or that we had grenades and rockets. Those manning the machineguns lay down their rifles and changed to their big boy toys. At that point the battle became decidedly uneven and we were having a merry old time. I was astonished how much damage 4 machine gunners and 5 snipers could do. The battle might have lasted longer, but they began to run out of ammo. Some idiot must have insisted that a standard combat load of 210 rounds would be adequate.

We also used the hand grenades but didn't bother with the rockets for obvious reasons. They were going to be hard to replace and the troopers were so spread out, it would have been a waste of a valuable resource. When they were down to about 15 people and out of ammo, the survivors surrendered. They threw down their guns, raised their hands and stood up.

"We need one live Officer or Noncom to question. Disarm and detain the rest until we talk this over."

Well, not everyone grabbed his/her handgun and ran forward to dispatch the remaining attackers. I suppose it was because of the uniforms they wore, American uniforms. Moreover, they could claim they were only following orders and would probably be telling the truth. I was having second thoughts now that we'd won and was beginning to think that the soldiers were the wrong people needing killing.

"Harry, are you ok?"

"I've got one hell of a bruise; it was good that they weren't using real rifles. If you need a volunteer to question that Officer/Noncom, I volunteer."

"You can join in, but I think it's really a job for SEALS and Special Forces. Follow their lead. David, you can hook up with Swede and pry the information out of the guy any way you see fit."

"What do you want to know?"

"First, who is behind this? Second, where are the other camps?"



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“What did you find out?”

## The Other Shoe – Chapter 16

“The Adjutant General of the Guard is dead. Some light colonel is running the show. He apparently doesn't have orders from any higher authority and is making this up as he goes along.”

“Does he have the full backing of his subordinates?”

“Some yes, some no.”

“It sounds like if we took out the colonel and some of his supporters, we could help the Guard get back on track,” David suggested.

“Where is he operating from?”

“Springfield.”

“You got a name?”

“Colonel Matt Cromwell.”

“Hey, I know that name.”

“Where from Harry?”

“Don't know if it's the same guy, but he was a Captain back during the days I served. Real piece of work, that one; there was only one way to do something properly, his way.”

“That sounds about right for our guy. So now what?”

“A road trip to Springfield!” echoed from 9 mouths.

“What do we do with these guys?”

“You got their arms, right? Put them in one of the HEMTTs and tell them to get lost. If they come back, we'll kill them on sight. Explain that they don't have anyone to guard anymore over at Leonard Wood.”

“Lynn, this is Hank. You ladies can come out now, it's all over. Good guys 2, bad guys 0.”

“You've got to stop doing things like this; my heart was in my mouth the whole time.”

“Sorry babe, one more exercise and then we'll stop.”

“You can explain it better tonight over a late supper.”

Oh, I explained it all right. I might as well been talking to the wall. Until she got a thoughtful look on her face and said, “You have all those Barrett sniper rifles; could you take him out at a mile or more?”

“Sixteen hundred ten meters, give or take. That should be doable.”

“So if you took four other guys, you could have five rifles each spitting out a round of the Mk 211 stuff?”

“Most snipers only work with an observer.”

“Is that chiseled in granite?”

“Not that I know of.”

“Fine, take five riflemen and one observer.”

“Two people would be less obtrusive than six.”

“I’ll get you a blanket.”

“What for?”

“You’re sleeping on the couch until you change your mind.”

I thought Lynn was kidding and figured after a night on the couch she’d change her mind. Impasse: a point at which no further progress can be made or agreement reached. As in:

“Changed your mind yet?”

“Nope.”

“Enjoy.”

All the while, the others were pressing David to do something about the Lt. Colonel in Springfield and he, in turn, was pressing me. I explained my problem and told him I was sticking to my guns. If he wanted do something that would get me out of the standoff, he should feel free. With that, the others began developing their own plan and it was about halfway between what I wanted to do and what Lynn wanted. I was not invited to participate and only knew about it because of Harry. It would be accomplished by four people, a sniper and observer, a driver and the driver’s bodyguard.

More details came to light; they'd be driving one of the HEMTTs with the driver and his bodyguard in the front and the sniper and his observer in the back. After dropping off the sniper and observer, the truck would be driven to an out-of-the-way spot and they'd wait for a radio call for the pickup. They were allowing two weeks for the operation. If they couldn't get a clear shot and take the Colonel out, they'd come back home and re-think the process.

The Colonel apparently thought he was the reincarnation of George S. Patton. Patton often claimed to behold visions of his ancestors. Anecdotal evidence indicates that he held himself to be the reincarnation of the Carthaginian general Hannibal, or a Roman legionary, or a Napoleonic marshal, etc.

"Changed your mind yet?"

"It's out of my hands; they left this morning to do it themselves."

"Who left?"

"David, Jeb, Frank and Stephanie."

"Three men and a woman? What is she, crazy?"

"They're all like family to her and they didn't go to play grab a...you know what I mean."

"I guess you're off the couch unless you still plan to participate."

"And if I do?"

"Enjoy."

"Now just one minute. I knew about it and didn't go, doesn't that count?"

"Did they ask you to go?"

"Well, no."

"Then it doesn't count. All you have to do is agree not to go to Springfield and try to take out that Colonel with less than a full force and you're off the couch."

"How long do you intend to keep this up?"

"One day longer than you plan to."

"I give up, you win."

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The couch had lumps in all the wrong places. My bed had lumps, too; all in the right places. The lumps in the couch were hard to the touch while the lumps in my bed were soft and yielding to my touch and occasionally gave off sounds of delight. What was that song? *Afternoon Delight* by the *Starlight Vocal Band*. I had downloaded several songs from YouTube with Real Player, including two versions of the song. I also had several versions of other songs that I liked: Space Oddity by David Bowie, Sukiyaki by Kyu Sakamoto and by Trish Thuy Trang, to name a few. I even burned them onto DVDs so I could play them without my computer when I wanted.

The English version of Sukiyaki, actually named 'Ue o Muite Arukou' had nothing in common with the Japanese words other than using the same music. It's like this:

上を向いて歩こう ue o muite arukō ([I] shall walk looking up)  
涙がこぼれないように namida ga kobore nai yō ni (so [my] tears won't fall)  
思い出す春の日 omoidasu haru no hi (remembering spring days)  
一人ぼっちな夜 hitori bocchi no yoru ([on this] lonely night)

"Ue o Muite Arukou"

Ue o muite arukou  
Namida ga kobore nai you ni  
Omoidasu haru no hi  
Hitoribotchi no yoru.

Ue o muite arukou  
Nijinda hoshi o kazoete  
Omoidasu natsu no hi  
Hitoribotchi no yoru.

Shiawase wa kumo no ue ni  
Shiawase wa sora no ue ni.

Ue o muite arukou  
Namida ga kobore nai you ni  
Nakinagara aruku  
Hitoribotchi no yoru.

Omoidasu aki no hi  
Hitoribotchi no yoru.

Kanashimi wa joshi no kage ni  
Kanashimi wa tsuki no kage ni.

Ue o muite arukou  
Namida ga kobore nai you ni

Nakinagara aruku  
Hitoribotchi no yoru  
Hitoribotchi no yoru.

“I Look Up As I Walk”

I look up as I walk  
So that the tears won't fall  
Remembering those spring days  
But I am all alone tonight

I look up as I walk  
Counting the stars with tearful eyes  
Remembering those summer days  
But I am all alone tonight

Happiness lies beyond the clouds  
Happiness lies up above the sky

I look up as I walk  
So that the tears won't fall  
Though the tears well up as I walk  
For tonight I'm all alone tonight

Remembering those autumn days  
But I am all alone tonight

Sadness lies in the shadow of the stars  
Sadness lurks in the shadow of the moon

I look up as I walk  
So that the tears won't fall  
Though the tears well up as I walk  
For tonight I'm all alone.

“Sukiyaki”

It's all because of you  
I'm feeling sad and blue  
You went away, now my life is just a rainy day  
And I love you so  
How much you'll never know  
You've gone away and left me lonely.

Untouchable memories seem to keep haunting me  
Love that's so true

That once turned all my gray skies blue  
But you disappeared  
Now my eyes are filled with tears  
And I'm wishing you were here with me.

Soft with love are my thoughts of you  
Now that you're gone I just don't know what to do.

If only you were here  
You'd wash away my tears  
The sun would shine  
And once again you'd be mine all mine

In reality  
You and I will never be  
You took your love away from me.

If only you were here  
You'd wash away my tears  
The sun would shine  
Once again you'd be mine all mine.

In reality  
You and I will never be  
Cause you took your love away from me, oh baby  
You took your love away from me.

Kyu Sakamoto was dead too, killed in an airliner crash in Japan, JAL flight 123. The crash didn't come as a surprise; he had time to write a goodbye note to his wife.

You Tube was long gone, along with the Internet, destroyed either by EMP or a direct strike. Anyone who actually knew the fate of You Tube and the Internet was probably long dead. I don't know where You Tube was being run from, but Wiki said it had started out in San Bruno, California and was the product of three former employees of Pay Pal.

Back to Sukiyaki, it is a Japanese dish It consists of meat (usually thinly sliced beef), or a vegetarian version made only with firm tofu, slowly cooked or simmered at the table, alongside vegetables and other ingredients, in a shallow iron pot in a mixture of soy sauce, sugar, and mirin. Before being eaten, the ingredients are usually dipped in a small bowl of raw, beaten eggs. Doesn't that sound lovely? Lovely was a word from or coined for My Fair Lady, if it sounds familiar, but you can't really place it.

*All I want is a room somewhere  
Far away from the cold night air  
With one enormous chair  
Oh, wouldn't it be lovely*

Back to the present, since we had four of our shooters off on an adventure, it seemed that the rest of us should maintain the guard. The rest consisted of Charles, Henry, the twins David and Donald, Harry and me. Six people could run 4 hour shifts, 4 on and 20 off. Since we had two David's, David the twin became Dave, his brother Don and David the SEAL/Deputy stayed David.

It remained to be seen if the soldiers we'd run off would go back to Leonard Wood, gather up their remaining buddies and come back. They were disarmed giving the prisoners an advantage because they'd been seen retrieving M16s and M4s. The soldiers in the mess hall still had their M16s and M4s and could hold off the sheeple that were left. Anyone with any courage at all had bolted the moment the gate was open, taking whatever weapons they could put their hands on.

Although we told them we'd shoot them on sight, it meant that we had to see them first. Some of the survivors of the first attack knew the lay of the land and should they come back, they wouldn't be obvious about it. Their first action with us had taught them lessons they could use against us. We installed replacement Claymores and added some to both sides of the property. A box of assorted grenades was placed in each fighting position along with 4 LAW rockets. We had a total of 7 foxholes and only six troops to man them. At least one of them would have to be 'manned' by a woman. Sally would have been perfect but she was buried under the oak tree. Frank's wife Shirley volunteered and their two boys, teenagers, armed themselves to act as backup. The other two teenagers we felt were old enough, Ronald and George, likewise armed themselves to act as backup. All four were using .30 caliber rifles, the M1As. We had one more teen who we didn't consider ready for combat, Sarah. She could watch the kids if our wives were forced to join in.

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If the Lt. Colonel was a rogue officer, what did that say about the people higher up? We could start at the Pentagon and go all the way to the President and the National Command Authority. The NCA was the President and the Secretary of Defense, acting in concert. Some of us were actually curious about who was running the country. We'd find out later and with it, other startling revelations. TOM had made much ado about who succeeded the President if no elections were held. He hadn't researched far enough; the answer lay in the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

The line of succession is mentioned in three places in the Constitution: in Article II, §1, in §3 of the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and in the 25<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

- Article II, § 1, Clause 6 makes the Vice President first in the line of succession and allows the Congress to provide by law for cases in which neither the President nor Vice President can serve. The current such law governing succession is the Presidential Succession Act of 1947 (3 USC §19).



●§3 of the 20th Amendment provides that if the President-elect dies before his or her term begins, the Vice President-elect becomes President on Inauguration Day and serves for the full term to which the President-elect was elected. The section also provides that if, on Inauguration Day, a president has not been chosen or the President-elect does not qualify for the presidency, the Vice President acts as president until a president is chosen or the President-elect qualifies. Finally, §3 allows the Congress to provide by law for cases in which neither a President-elect nor a Vice President-elect is eligible or available to serve.

●The 25th Amendment, ratified in 1967, clarified Article II, § 1: that the Vice President is the direct successor of the President. He or she becomes President if the President dies, resigns or is removed from office. The 25th also provides for the situation where the President is temporarily disabled, such as if the President has a surgical procedure or becomes mentally unstable. It also required vice presidential vacancies to be filled by the President and confirmed by Congress. Previously, when a vice president had succeeded to the presidency or otherwise left the office empty (through death, resignation, or removal from office), the vice presidency remained vacant.

The current line of succession is:

Vice President and President of the Senate  
Speaker of the House  
President Pro Tempore of the Senate  
Secretary of State  
Secretary of Treasury  
Secretary of Defense  
Attorney General  
Secretary of Interior  
Secretary of Agriculture  
Secretary of Commerce  
Secretary of Labor  
Secretary of Health and Human Services  
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development  
Secretary of Transportation  
Secretary of Energy  
Secretary of Education  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
Secretary of Homeland Security

Persons who are not natural-born citizens are constitutionally ineligible to the office of President, as are persons who are not at least thirty-five years old or have not resided in the United States for fourteen years. This is also specified in the Presidential Succession Act. To be in the line of succession, an officer must have been appointed and confirmed by the Senate, prior to the death, resignation, removal from office, inability, or otherwise failure to qualify of the President pro tempore. Therefore, acting officers who have not been confirmed into the position cannot be in the line of succession.

Yeah, I know, where did I come up with that? I had a file called Presidential Succession on my computer, copied from multiple Wiki sites, that I'd never bothered to read before. With the present situation, I decided it was time to read the file. If we still had the Internet, I'd have emailed a copy to TOM.

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Our small force returned home on the 10<sup>th</sup> day, all smiles. They'd nosed around some and figured out whom that Colonel's supportive aides were and Stephanie had demonstrated her shooting skills, killing the Colonel and his two highest ranking aides in the span of about 45 seconds. The next highest ranking subordinate was totally against what the Colonel had been doing and he was now in charge. Word was that he was totally opposed to the internment camps; we'd have to wait and see.

"Congratulations, you deserve a medal for a job well done. Would you settle for a cold beer?"

"Outstanding. You should have seen Stephanie, pop, pop, pop; all in a span of 45 seconds tops. Could have easily been anywhere from 15 to 30 seconds, I wasn't watching my watch because my eye was glued to the observation scope."

"What was the range?"

"Maybe 1,200 meters (1,312 yards). Anyway, with three shots spaced so close together, they immediately looked in our direction and we boogied as soon as we called the HEMTT."

"You could have let us know."

"It wasn't that far home; we figured you could wait a couple of hours. Are you still sleeping on the couch?"

"I caved in."

"Good for you, you have to let them win sometimes."

"We're set here except for needing 2 loads of diesel for reserve, we filled the tanks while you were gone."

"That wind turbine working well?"

"You betcha."

"I've got to go tell Shirley that we're home to stay."

"See you later, Frank."

The next day we drove two tanker trailers up to the depot in Jefferson City and refilled them. Each tractor had a driver and two riflemen, just in case. We didn't have any trouble and as soon as the 32,000-gallons of diesel were loaded, we headed home.

No troops showed up for about 3 months. When they did, it was a Hummer, driven by a private and carrying two more privates and a Sergeant. They stopped at the turn in to the acreage and honked their horn, waiting to see if anyone was there. In less than a minute, we had them surrounded. The Sergeant and two of the privates dismounted, their M16s slung.

"I'm Sergeant Johnson out of Springfield. We're moving through the area taking a census and seeing if anyone needs food or medical aid."

"I'm Henry Brown and I own this property. Are you sure you aren't from Stalag 9?"

"Are you referring to camp MO-9?"

"As a matter of fact, yes."

"What do you know about the place?"

"Not much, only that it exists."

"Existed. Some group of patriots attacked the place and set everyone free. The new Officer in Charge of the Missouri National Guard has ordered all twelve camps closed, the internees provided with food, medical care and returned home. Does anyone here require medical aid? No? How is your food supply?"

"We have a little, maybe 30 days' worth. Further down the road is a 160 acre farm that two of our members occupy. We're planning on growing livestock feed and maybe a truck garden."

"When you have food available, let us know."

"How?"

"On 40-meters, the frequency we use is 7.150mhz. How about that census?"

"Come up to the house, we'll answer your questions and feed you some coffee."

"You have coffee?"

"You mean you don't?"

## The Other Shoe – Chapter 17

“Instant.”

“We have Folgers, if that’s ok.”

“More like wonderful. All four of us?”

“Sure thing.”

“Everyone seems to have a military bearing. Are you all veterans?”

“Yep, mostly special forces of one kind or another. I was a Marine and our Chief of Security was a SEAL. We have Rangers, Special Forces, FORECON and even some Infantry.”

“Anyone interested in reenlisting? They’ll give you a two-step promotion.”

“I can’t speak for the others, but I wouldn’t do it for a promotion to Master Gunnery Sergeant.”

“Noncoms get a three-step promotion.”

“Thanks, but no thanks. Ask everyone, I doubt you’ll get many takers.”

It took about an hour detailing who was in our group, where they came from, births, deaths, occupations, prior military service, etc. All newly born/unvaccinated children would be put on a list and vaccinations would be available at the county seat. We’d be informed beforehand to make sure we’d bring the kids. Children who hadn’t completed their vaccinations series would receive vaccinations per a doctor’s instructions.

“You know, this group would make one hell of a local militia. Have you ever thought of starting one?”

“Our main interest has been in protecting our homes.”

“The law provides for unorganized militias. The National Guard is the organized militia, but we’re simply spread too thin. We’ve been suggesting small, local unorganized militias not under our span of control. When a group is formed, we review their equipment and try our best to give them whatever they need. We can supply radios, rifles, ammunition, ordnance and quite a range of things.”

“We have all of that.”

“Yes? Care to tell me what you do have?”

“A few poodle shooters, a large number of 7.62×51mm rifles, assorted hand grenades including smoke, concussion and fragmentation. Rockets and Claymores plus a whole bunch of .50-caliber Barrett rifles.”

“It’s not our policy to ask where you got the stuff; you’d probably just lie anyway. I would be in the same position. If you need more AT-4s, we can get them.”

“We don’t have AT-4s; we have M72A7s.”

“Really? We might be able to get you the M72E10 versions if you need them. The M72 was to have been replaced by the M136 AT4 rocket, but remained in US service to support the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). You’d be surprised how many there are out there in various locations.”

“Not really, that’s where we salvaged ours, out there.”

“Need any 7.62 ammo?”

“No, do you?”

“What are you using in your Barrett rifles?”

“M-33 and Mk 211. The .416 caliber uses ball ammo.”

“Jeezus, remind me not to get on your bad side.”

“Tell us more about this unorganized militia.”

“Well, here goes.

“Title 10, Subtitle A, Chapter 13,

“§ 311. Militia: composition and classes

“(a) The militia of the United States consists of all able-bodied males at least 17 years of age and, except as provided in section 313 of title 32, under 45 years of age who are, or who have made a declaration of intention to become, citizens of the United States and of female citizens of the United States who are members of the National Guard.

“(b) The classes of the militia are:

“(1) The organized militia, which consists of the National Guard and the Naval Militia; and

“(2) The unorganized militia, which consists of the members of the militia who are not members of the National Guard or the Naval Militia.”

“So, the authority lies in §311b2?”

“Exactly. You are expected to provide your own weapons, but we’ve been making exceptions. We have also been supplying all kinds of ordnance, mostly ammunition.”

“How are they being unorganized, city by city or county by county?”

“County by county, in conjunction with, but not reporting to, the County Sheriff.”

“How large are these unorganized militias?”

“It varies. Mostly rural counties get by with a much smaller force than an area that includes a major city, like Jefferson City. The key seems to be how many military veterans there are in each county.”

“Who provides the training?”

“Whoever assembles the local militia.”

“What’s the span of the militia’s authority?”

“Maintain law and order in accordance with the laws of Missouri. Certain laws have been preempted; firearm laws are a good example since we’re arming some of the militias with M16 rifles and M4 carbines. If your county Sheriff needs assistance, he’ll let you know.”

“I’ll have to say that it sounds like a contradiction of terms,” David replied, “An organized, unorganized militia.”

“Regardless, are you interested?”

“We’d have to talk it over and get back to you. What about the Sheriff?”

“I’ll mention a group that’s considering it and only give him one name.”

“Better yet, give him two first names, Hank and Harry; no last names.”

“You have a deal. Don’t forget, the frequency is 7.150mhz.”

40 meters is considered the most reliable all-season DX band, most useful for inter-continental communication at night. It is extremely useful for short to medium distance contacts from local contacts out to a range of 500–1500 km, depending on conditions, during the day. In higher latitudes, daytime inter-continental communication is also possible in winter, for example a good path often opens between Japan and northern Eu-

rope in the hours leading up to European midday from late November until late January, with a long path opening to the west coast of the US and Canada after midday.

Due to the 24 hour nature of the band, the wide variety of ranges that can be spanned with it, and its shared nature, it tends to be extremely crowded, and interference from other amateurs and broadcasters can be a serious limiting factor. In addition, amateurs in east and south-east Asia have suffered severe interference from illegal users in recent years. It was easy to see why the Missouri Guard had picked the frequency.

When the Sergeant offered to supply radios, I imagine he was thinking along the lines of HAM radios. We had HAM radios, but more importantly, we had SINCGARS and Spearheads. He didn't follow up on his question and we didn't expand our answer. Perhaps when a good level of trust was established, we might; actually, I rather doubt it in view of Stalag 9.

*My fellow Americans,*

*I come to you today from a little known federal bunker. My name is Herb Walker and before the war, I was the Secretary of Interior. As such, I was 8<sup>th</sup> in the line of succession to the Presidency of the United States. I have been sworn in as President because the President and the successors above me didn't survive the war.*

*I assure you I didn't want the post. Our country and most of the world has been destroyed in the nuclear conflagration. As nearly as we can tell, 90% of the world's population died as a direct or indirect result of the war and its aftermath. Our information sources are the same sources as those who survived so I assume you have reached the same conclusions.*

*At the moment, we do not have an effective standing Army or Air Force. We have Marines and Naval personnel who were on board ships not directly involved in the conflict. I won't pull any punches here; for the moment, the states are on their own.*

*We lack most, if not all, of the things we've previously taken for granted. There is no organized... anything. We will not federalize any of the state's National Guard units because the states need them worse than we do. About the only thing your federal government can do for you is to use our remaining Naval Forces to provide for a common defense. However, I fail to see that that will be necessary.*

*Representatives will be in contact with whoever is in charge of the states, excluding Alaska and Hawaii, and we'll do our best to coordinate cleanup and recovery efforts.*

*God bless the survivors.*

"Secretary of Interior? Anyone know anything about the guy?"

“The Agency is called the US Department of Everything Else. Most of the Secretaries are from the western states. I think this guy is from New Mexico or Arizona. They have the BLM, Bureau of Reclamation, BIA, National Parks, USGS, a whole bunch of agencies that don’t fit into a better department.”

“We need to make a decision about that militia thing. What do you think?”

“About as much bad as good, if you ask me,” I answered.

“Explain that.”

“As a militia supporting the laws of Missouri, our actions would be sanctioned. So far, we’ve only gotten involved in actions that we’ve chosen. The way I see it, once we’re sanctioned, we’ll be subject to call up. If it’s to take on some place like MO-9, that’s one thing; if it’s to be an extension of the Sheriff’s Department, that could be quite another. I didn’t vote for the guy because we lived in another county, Texas County. This retreat or whatever you choose to call it is located in Phelps County. Most of you came down here from Cole County and you didn’t vote for him, either.”

“True, but...”

The discussion continued for several days with no resolution. I was trying to keep track of everyone’s position for my diary. I’d started the diary back when I worked for Costco in St. Peters. But, I digress and I did want to explain why I’d picked the particular firearms I’d purchased. My inspiration came from TOM. He must have studied the M1A for years and knew exactly what he wanted. He couldn’t afford it, based on something he said in one of his stories based on his family and settled for the Loaded rather than the Super Match. He said he’d first heard of the M14 as a child and had wanted one ever since. Fifty years later, he finally had one.

I was single at the time I started saving in 2004. He liked anything 1911 when it came to handguns and for a time talked about the Springfield Armory Hi-Capacity. He settled for the Taurus PT1911, probably because of the PRK’s limit on 10-round magazines. Wait, that’s not right, the PT1911 wasn’t California legal so that wasn’t it. I knew he highly favored the Remington 870 and was surprised when he said he’d gotten a Mossberg 590A1. Again, he studied guns and I figured if it was good enough for him, I couldn’t go wrong. The one other rifle he wanted was a Barrett M107, but confessed that he probably couldn’t even pick it up.

Several other squirrels thought highly of the M1A with the main complaint being the cost of the rifle, the extra magazines and especially the ammo. At least we’d found a good place to get ammo and the price was right. Every former service member of our group had a M107, Stephanie also had that model 99 and I had the model 95 with a silencer because it was a bolt action. There was no real reason why we couldn’t act as a local Phelps County Militia; of course, we had planned on farming the 160 down the road.



Harry said if we counted him out, he'd take a stab at the farming if the twins would answer his questions.

That cut our potential force to nine and made for an odd number eliminating any tie votes. When the final vote came, despite all of the debate, it was 9 for, 0 against, forming a militia unit. We notified someone on 7.150mhz, it wasn't the Sergeant, and they said they'd notify the Phelps County Sheriff. It would be up to us to go to Rolla and introduce ourselves.

"Hank, I may be in charge of security, but this is your place. How about Frank, you and I go see the Sheriff?"

"Ok David, when?"

"Now is as good a time as any."

One of the long-time Deputies was now the acting Sheriff; we didn't know him and he didn't know us. When he took over, he decided he'd allow salvaging, but no looting. He was using the same definitions that you generally saw in survival fiction. For all we knew, he could be a closet prepper or a flat out survivalist. We called ourselves preppers; down deep we were all survivalists. I'd reflected on how much our actions reflected the behavior of other survivors in some of TOM's stories. Perhaps I'd let his stories influence me too much.

There was a poll one time on Frugal's asking about your 3 weapons. That assumed you didn't have more or less, I suppose. I didn't add a comment; TPTB went to the website and why tell them what I had? If they really wanted to know, there were always the 4473s. I did agree with one point, an AR15 was not a Main Battle Rifle. The US had a long history of over 100 years using .30-caliber rifles for MBRs. It started with the .30-40 Krag, moved to the 1903 Springfield .30-06, graduated to the M1 Garand .30-06 and finally to the debugged Garand, the M14 in .308 NATO.

While the M14 remained in service, during the war in Vietnam, an Assault Rifle was adopted to replace the MBR. What can I say? Carlos Hathcock didn't use a poodle shooter to make his kills. He generally used a Winchester model 70 in .30-06 with a Unertl scope. Perhaps as a result of his using a M2HB machine gun mounting his telescopic sight for sniping and making a kill at 2,286 meters or 1.42 miles, Barrett felt inspired to build the Barrett .50BMG rifle. Although the military didn't routinely issue MBRs, they still had them and they were used by the SEALs, Designated Marksmen and even the Navy and Coast Guard.

As it happened, the Super Match I started out with had a muzzle brake as opposed to the national match flashhider. When we outfitted it with the FA762S, I had a choice and stayed with the muzzle brake because it served to reduce the recoil slightly and was a better flashhider than the national match flashhider. In case you're interested, Surefire's part number is MB762SSA. The rifle was Springfield Armory's part number SA9804CA.

The Deputy thought he was bad, a real hard case. He hadn't done anything about Stalag 9, although he most certainly knew about it and admitted that he did. His claim was that he didn't have enough people in Rolla. Come off it, Sheriff, we did it with 10 people and almost had too many to handle the attack. The only real difference between our group and any other group of veterans was some additional training. For a Marine it was just a longer boot camp. We didn't say much because we had his number.

"Do you believe that shit?"

"I was going to offer him one of the SINCGARS we captured and enough Spearheads for his Deputies; thank God I didn't open my mouth."

"How many spares do we have?"

"SINCGARS or Spearheads?"

"Both, either."

"We have 3 SINCGARS and 9 Spearheads after each vehicle, each home and the cave was equipped with SINCGARS. All 10 of us have Spearheads and the extras are for our wives, if they need them."

"You may need all 9 if you have more kids."

"We're not planning on having any more, 4 is enough."

"You realize that planning and what actually happens have nothing in common."

"We're taking our precautions."

"I've heard that before."

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"I have something to tell you. Promise you won't get mad?"

"How can I make a promise like that until you tell me?"

"Well, I can't change it and if you don't like it, there's always the couch, again."

"Ok, I promise."

"I'm pregnant."

"I guess I should have stayed on the couch."

“At least we’ll only have one in diapers.”

“Yeah, unless you decide to have twins again.”

“It’s not me, it’s you Hank.”

“Maybe it’s both of us; we’re just a lucky combination. So are you going to have twins, triplets or quadruplets?”

“Bite your tongue. We could handle twins, again, but I only have two spigots. We don’t have much Enfamil stored up, either. Fortunately, we have plenty of diapers. I’m not the only one who is pregnant, or haven’t you noticed?”

“That comes from not having TV.”

If anything good came out of our meeting with the Sheriff, it was that we learned about the family practice doctor in Rolla. Family medicine differs from the traditional European general practitioner. In the US family practitioners usually complete an undergraduate degree and then complete either the Doctor of Medicine degree (M.D.) or a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree (D.O.). Physician who specialize in family medicine (also known as a family physician), however, must complete a three-year family medicine residency in addition to their medical degree, and are eligible for the board certification now required by most hospitals and health plans.

The term "family medicine" is used in many European countries instead of "general medicine" or "general practice". In Sweden, certification in family medicine needs five years working with a tutor, after the medical degree. Similar systems have been implemented in other countries.

Most family physicians practice in solo or small-group private practices or as hospital employees in practices of similar sizes owned by hospitals. Still, many choose to teach medicine at medical schools or family medicine residency programs, though usually for much less pay. Others choose to practice as consultants to various medical institutions, including insurance companies.

“There is a family medicine practice doctor in Rolla.”

“What no OB-GYN?”

“I didn’t hear about one, but the doctor should know if there is an OB-GYN, don’t you think?”

“I haven’t needed one so far, OB-GYN is a surgical specialty. I’ll be okay as long as we only have twins or a single baby.”

“Why?”

“Usually, triplets and more are delivered by C section.”

“I didn’t know that. It’s strange; Harry was just saying something about you getting pregnant again.”

“Oh, what did Harry say?”

“We were talking about the radios and I told him we had 3 SINCGARS and 9 Spearheads left. He said, *You may need all 9 if you have more kids.* I told him, *We’re taking our precautions.* I thought we were.”

“I think the pills are getting old. They were expired when we found them.”

“Are you sure you didn’t miss taking one?”

“I don’t think I did. Surely missing one dose wouldn’t result in a pregnancy.”

Very low dose progestogen-only contraceptives, such as traditional progestogen-only pills, inconsistently inhibit ovulation in ~50% of cycles and rely mainly on their progestogenic effect of thickening the cervical mucus and thereby reducing sperm viability and penetration. Lynn was taking the so-called mini-pill, a progestogen-only contraceptive. I guess we should have read the label before she got pregnant, not after.

“Guess what?”

“Lynn is pregnant.”

“How did you know, Harry?”

“I didn’t but you were so damned sure of yourself, it just sort of figured. That new Sheriff is a real piece of work, I happy that I said I’d stay down on the farm.”

“I think we all plan on staying down on the farm, it is as simple as not monitoring the radio frequency he gave us, 14.000mhz. That’s an extra class only frequency and I think we should obey the law for a change.”

“Listen but not transmit?”

“Wouldn’t want to break any more laws, now would we?”

“What did David, you and Frank tell him about our location?”

“I gave him our mailing address and the zip code 65542.”

“Wait, that’s the zip code for Licking. Edgar Springs is 65462.”

“You don’t say.”

“You did it on purpose.”

“Only after he tried to play hard ball. It’s pretty close; just a slip of the tongue.”

Did any of you ever read the story where TOM described Fourth Generation War? It wasn’t his idea, rather, something he’d read. The guy behind it was William S. Lind. Fourth Generation warfare has often involved an insurgent group or non-state entity trying to implement their own government or reestablish an old government over the current ruling power. However, a fourth generation war is most successful when the non-state entity does not attempt, at least in the short term, to impose its own rule, but tries simply to disorganize and delegitimize the state in which the warfare takes place. The aim is to force the state adversary to expend manpower and money in an attempt to establish order, ideally in such a highhanded way that it merely increases disorder, until the state surrenders or withdraws. Fourth generation war could be said to be the ultimate strategy of scorched earth, leaving nothing for the occupier to occupy. Speaking figuratively, the non-state adversary, not being able to expel the invader from his home, tries to bring it down on both their heads, leaving the invader no choice but to leave the ruins alone.

Lind was an opponent of Iraqi Freedom and is the Director of the Center for Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation. He advocated a Declaration of Cultural Independence by cultural conservatives in the US, in the belief that the Federal government had ceased to represent their interests, and begun to coerce them into negative behavior and affect their culture in a negative fashion. The Center believed that American culture and its institutions were headed for a collapse, and that cultural conservatives should separate themselves from the calamity it foresees. It supported setting up independent parallel institutions with a right to secession and a highly decentralized nature that would rely on individual responsibility and discipline to remain intact, but would prevent the takeover of the institutions by those hostile to cultural conservatism's ideals.

Lind has been criticized by writer Thomas E. Ricks in a *The Atlantic Monthly* magazine article *The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society* where Ricks asserted that Lind's rhetoric differs from what Ricks called "standard right-wing American rhetoric of the '90s" because Lind suggests that "The next real war we fight is likely to be on American soil."

You don’t say...I read the paper too; it described Operation David which made more sense than some of our activities in Iraq and Afghanistan. I like the part where it says, ‘The aim is to force the state adversary to expend manpower and money in an attempt to establish order, ideally in such a highhanded way that it merely increases disorder, until the state surrenders or withdraws.’

Why is that important? It would depend upon which 'state adversary we were facing. If it was the County Sheriff, we'd probably send one person to resolve that situation, maybe Stephanie. If it was the state of Missouri, it might take all of us and then some. If it was the feds, we'd just stay home and let the other good citizens of this country taken them on. However, irregular warfare conducted by highly trained soldiers acts as a force multiplier. As long as we didn't get a big head and start to believe we couldn't be taken, we probably couldn't. Over confidence could get you killed in a New York minute.

## The Other Shoe – Chapter 18

The strange part was the Sheriff didn't call and ask for help. Well, if you allow yourself to become full of pride, you will find yourself humiliated. Be modest. Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. Read that in a book somewhere (KJV). We almost went up to Rolla to see if everything was ok. We decided that if it wasn't, the Guard would let us know.

The upside to that situation was we all got a chance to learn how to farm, with Harry supervising. Except Harry didn't know squat about farming and Dave and Don would have to teach him how. It turned into a group affair and Stephanie would go up to the acreage to spend time with our wives and we stumbled around learning how to mount a 3 bottom plow, to plow in a straight line, disk down the chunks and drag it level. I swear his corn planter must have been 60 years old. It was a John Deere that used a knotted wire to trip the planter to release the seeds.

Don said that it was a pain in the butt, but you sure got pretty looking corn rows; and, you could see down the rows, across the rows and diagonally if you did it right. We also planted soybeans, oats and wheat. We had the garden spot up on the acreage and it was the first thing we plowed after we had the plow mounted. It was one hell of a lot easier operating a fork lift.

While we did the farmer bit, our wives and Stephanie did the gardening. They made a trip down to Licking and cleaned out our jars, Harry and Sally's jars and all the jars and rings available in abandoned homes. They collected the available lids, yielding enough for two canning seasons.

I contacted the Sergeant down in Springfield and he turned out to be in his office, or at least available. I explained that we could produce more food if he could get us jars, lids and rings. He wanted to know if those plastic lids would do and I explained they were for use after you opened a canned jar of food. He said they'd do their best. How were we getting along with the Sheriff? I told him the Sheriff hadn't called so we were getting along fine. He then asked if there was a problem and I turned the question around and asked him the same thing.

"He wasn't the elected Sheriff, just the longest serving Deputy. He seemed to know what he was doing, but I didn't get the feeling he was strong on public relations."

"Well, the Sheriff thought he was bad, a real hard case. He hadn't done anything about Stalag 9, although he most certainly knew about it and admitted that he did. His claim was that he didn't have enough people in Rolla. Hell we did it with 10 people."

"I wondered about that."

"Oops. I forgot we didn't tell you it was us."

“In a pig’s eye. You just didn’t want to get caught between a rock and a hard spot.”

“There is that. When you asked if we had radios, were you talking about Ham radios or military radios?”

“All kinds of radio, Hank. If you have SINCGARS, so much the better. How did you get them to run on 12v systems?”

“We took the 5w man portable radios because they were 12 volt. We have enough Spearheads to equip anyone trained to carry a rifle. I knew what they were from reading some literature, but never knew the military issued them. If the Guard has them, the military must have them because the Guard gets what’s left over. One of our guys is in-to comms.”

“How many select fire weapons do you really have?”

“Not many, most SpecOps folks prefer the MBR. I have 4 for my kids. There may be a few others, I think Stephanie probably as one. She’s a real gun nut and has one of everything worth having. However, we do have suppressors for most of the M1As and M16s.”

“Did you clean Lake City out?”

“Nah, we only took some trucks, not a train.”

“And I suppose it’s all stored in your bomb shelter?”

“Wrong again, we have a cave. It’s rather nice and large enough for everyone here if it weren’t for an extended period. It’s just your typical cave with a blast door, ventilation system, hot and cold water, washer and dryer, freezer, refrigerator and the standard appliances. We’d have to sleep in shifts if we need to use it again.”

“I’ll bet that’s an interesting story.”

“Next time you come by, stop in for coffee and we’ll fill you in.”

“I’ll do what I can on the canning supplies; watch your back when it comes to that Sheriff.”

“Talk to you soon Sergeant Johnson.”

“I’ll bring up the disk with our programming codes we’re using on our SINCGARS, if you have extra, you may want to program one with our frequency hopping data.”

“Thanks.”



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A month later, a pair of HEMTTs showed up with jars, lids, rings and canning spices. Sergeant Al Johnson came along and we sat and talked about what had happened after the war. He was on his third pot of coffee by the time we'd covered all of it. I asked if they'd ever come up with coffee and he admitted that they had, but there was only enough for the officer's mess. I showed him the cave and while we were in the storage room, gave him a full case of Folgers.

"That's for you and the troops; it's not salvage that you found for the officers. It's only 12 cans and won't go too far, but we'll look around for more."

"You saw the elephant, huh?"

"Ugly SOB. I suppose that within our group, David has the most experience; one tour in Iraq and two in Afghanistan. Got out and became a Deputy Sheriff up in Cole County."

"Jefferson City?"

"Right, that's where we get our, uh, some of our supplies."

"I saw those fuel tankers. Depot in Jefferson City? Wait, don't answer that, maybe it is better if I don't know. It might be a good idea for you to stock up before the Guard is forced to commandeer those supplies."

"I'll keep that in mind. If we did, it would just about use up our supply of PRI products."

"We can get those products, does the stuff really work?"

"I can guarantee it does."

"Can you get by if we take what's left?"

"If we get 2 more tankers, we'll have 96,000-gallons in tankers, about 16,000-gallons of gasoline, 80,000-gallons of diesel plus the 20,000 plus-gallons of diesel in under the ground tanks. We should be okay for now."

"Do you have enough to refill my tank?"

"Gee, I don't know, how much are you paying?" I laughed.

I wasn't about to step on it now that we had a new friend in one Sergeant Albert Johnson. A M1114 only holds about 25 gallons and we wouldn't mess that little. Besides, Al said he had a source for PRI-G and D. After he left, we tried to figure out where we'd last seen a pair of empty tankers. We'd gotten those we seen along the highways and

we'd seen none in Licking. We'd try Rolla first and Jefferson City second. Empty tankers should be easier to find than full tankers, too.

We took the last of our PRI products with us, we had just enough for 32,000-gallons of diesel; 16 gallons of PRI-D. We also decided to check around Jefferson City for coffee service companies. They frequently maintain large supplies of premeasured envelopes or packages of coffee; plus creamers and sweeteners.

We found one tanker in Rolla and another in Jefferson City. While four of us worked on filling the tankers with diesel, several of us went shopping. We filled a U-Haul load from one coffee place and a second from another. We filled one pickup from a third and the last from a fourth. Those were the only coffee services we could find in the Yellow Pages. We were home in 6 hours and I called and left a message for Al to radio back concerning coffee.

"Hank, Al Johnson. What's this about coffee?"

"How about a straight trade, coffee, creamers and sweeteners for PRI products?"

"Did you find some more?"

"We have about 6 different brands, all in premeasured packs. We have two pickup loads and two trailer loads. In exchange we'd like to have 4 cases of PRI-G in gallon cans, and 16 cases of PRI-D. One case will treat 12,000-gallons. Just so you know, there are 6 one-gallon jugs per case. We have another source if you take over that depot."

"What do you have?"

"A lot of Jet A."

"Where did you get that?"

"Not over the air. Don't forget your SINGARS codes."

Most US Army trucks will run on anything from alcohol to gasoline to Jet A to #2 diesel. We had those HEMTTs and a good mechanic to tune the engines if they didn't like the fuel we were using. That would be for some time, our wind turbine was producing almost all of our electricity now and the PV panels were keeping the batteries charged.

It was interesting that we'd quickly transferred to a barter economy, especially in that it was with the Missouri National Guard; the good one, not the ones who ran the Stalags. Even more interesting, at least to me, was the fact that the Secretary of Interior, now President, admitted they couldn't do much to help and had shifted the burden back onto the states, where it should have been in the first place. It wouldn't hurt the country to take a step back and undo some of the entitlements and various programs that had come with FDR's New Deal.

Many of those programs were nothing more than government operated charities and their administrative costs and inefficiencies weren't the best way to operate a nation. The country needed to get its nose out of other countries problems and address our own. Which is a good place to remind you about TOM's view on the Rule of Threes. He well and truly believed that bad things happened in 3s. Going by that standard, we were  $\frac{2}{3}$  of our way there. The first was the total collapse of the world economy and second was WW III.

I had some kind of natural disaster at the top of my list such as in a Gamma Ray Burst, an Asteroid, a major earthquake or possibly, although remote, a Supervolcano. The most recent was Mt. Toba 75,000 years ago and the next one back had been Yellowstone or Long Valley; Long Valley had erupted before the last Yellowstone eruption, I think. California had more than its share of earthquakes and the New Madrid Fault Zone was not very far away from Edgar Springs, a few hundred miles, down in the boot heel. I seriously doubted that the Europeans were still working with the CERN collider and a black hole seemed unlikely. It seemed like the only possibilities that might affect us were New Madrid, Yellowstone or Long Valley.

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Since the war had involved all nuclear powers and several non-nuclear powers, even if the President wanted to call for UN assistance, none would be forthcoming. Russia had hit multiple targets in Western Europe and the minor nuclear powers were even less capable of providing assistance. The only continent we hadn't heard from so far was Australia. If they'd been hit, it was the work of the Chinese. There weren't that many targets in Australia compared to the US and Russia. Plus, the Chinese had to consider the Japanese.

Back in 2008, I think, there had been some discussion in the MSM about Japan developing a nuclear weapons program, despite prohibitions in their Constitution. I'd seen a program on History Channel, I think, describing the Japanese test of an atomic bomb during WW II. There was a write up about it on Wiki and the facts were disputed.

I could only imagine that the Chinese had hit the Japanese as a precaution. The Japanese Islands are geologically unstable; they have more earthquakes than California. Back in 2004, a tsunami that reached all the way to Africa was triggered by a subsurface fault zone slip off the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. The USGS reported rumblings at Yellowstone in response to earthquakes as far away as California and Alaska. Going with that, I realized that we had our own subduction zone, Cascadia. Now what would happen if Cascadia slipped and triggered the San Andreas? With two massive earthquakes, what would that do to Yellowstone, Long Valley or the New Madrid Seismic Zone?

They say the odds are 1:20,000. Twenty thousand days is about 54.75 years. The last time Yellowstone went boom was around 640,000 years ago. Why aren't the odds more

like 1:233,760,000? The last major earthquake on the New Madrid was in 1811-12. The last major earthquake on the San Andreas was 1906. The odds on the former should be something like 1:73,500 and the latter 1:38,716 for any given day. Yellowstone was overdue, but that didn't mean squat, it didn't answer to anyone except Mother Nature or Global Tectonics. Yellowstone could blow up tomorrow or 25 generations hence. It doesn't pay to worry about what is beyond your control.

When the garden came in, our wives and Stephanie began canning up a storm. They were using Mirro, Presto and All American pressure canners. The water bath canners were used to get the food prepared for canning. We didn't plant lettuce outside because we grew more than enough in the greenhouse. We went for the big plants, potatoes, corn, squash, and green beans. They did a few rows of beets; it wasn't the most popular vegetable. Other large crops included onions, peppers, and several varieties of tomato.

It was best to stay in the present; we were plenty busy getting the field crops tended to in the same vein as our wives tended to the garden. One thing did come up, Harry and Stephanie. It seems that their casual relationship had morphed into something more. Harry said to blame it on Stephanie and she said to blame it on Harry. I had the distinct impression that there was an additional empty bedroom in the farm house. It was best to not stick my nose in their business.

"Have you heard about Harry and Stephanie?"

"They're an item, right?"

"That's news to me; she didn't say anything about that. No, she's teaching him how to ride a horse. You know how shaky he was on a horse. Well, she's been teaching him riding and says he close to becoming an accomplished rider. What makes you think they're an item?"

"Nothing specific, Lynn. They seemed to be very comfortable around each other. I asked Harry and he said blame it on Stephanie. Stephanie came back early from canning, so I asked her and she just smiled and said blame it on Harry. Since they're both living in the same house and both single, I assumed they were sharing the same bed."

"You know where assuming gets you, don't you?"

"Yeah, it makes an ass out of u and me."

"Leave me out of it; you're on your own here."

"Not to change the subject, but how goes the garden? Will we have enough to supply others or just enough for ourselves?"

"My best guess would be the latter. Depending on how much wheat you produce on the farm, we might have wheat or flour available. Why?"

“We got that coffee in Jefferson City and I let Sergeant Al Johnson know. He’s bringing us PRI fuel stabilizers in exchange for the coffee. I noticed he’s wearing a wedding ring and got to wondering if his family was safe. They might be ok; but, on the other hand, this is about as safe a place as a person could be.”

“Harry and Stephanie have one empty bedroom. If you’re right about their situation, they might have two. Talk to your friend Al about moving them down here, if you want. If nothing else, he might be able to get them a travel trailer. For that matter, there is Harry and Sally’s trailer that he left for our use.”

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“There you go Hank, it was all we could find on short notice, but there is enough for 300,000-gallons of diesel and for 32,000-gallons of gasoline.”

“The coffee products are in the two U-Haul trailers and under the tarps on the two pickups we used. Have your guys’ load the stuff and we’ll have lunch. I wanted to talk to you about a personal matter.”

“You have a problem?”

“No, I was wondering if you might have a problem.”

“What kind of problem?”

“Well, I saw the wedding band. You’re married, right?”

“My wife’s name is Jolene and we have two children, Albert Jr. and Janice. Why do you ask?”

“How comfortable are you with their personal security?”

“Oh, I see what you mean. I’d have to say I’m moderately comfortable. We only live about two miles from military headquarters. I’ve equipped Jolene and Al Jr. with M4s and M9 pistols. They have a radio and can call for help, if needed.”

“Where is headquarters?”

“Springfield-Branson Regional Airport.”

“We have an empty trailer. It was the one that Harry originally brought here and his wife Sally and he lived in. First off, Sally died of cancer and Stephanie helped out keeping that trailer clean for him. Later, he and she moved to the 160 acre farm down the road and he left us his trailer in case we needed it. We have one empty travel trailer that’s

fully equipped plus Harry and Stephanie have one or two empty bedrooms. I discussed offering a place for your family with my wife Lynn.”

“That might not be a half bad idea. Jolene is worried about being so far from HQ. Would you have enough food and things like that?”

“As far as food goes, our garden is only producing enough for those who live here. About the only surplus we might have would be our wheat crop and some of the corn and oats.”

“What would they need to bring?”

“Their clothes, of course and we’d prefer that they have something like the M14 rifles and decent handguns, like .45-caliber pistols.”

“What, no shotguns? There’s the Benelli M4 Combat Shotguns, also known as the M1014. We have three. I also have one Mossberg 590A1 that I bought a few years back.”

“Any chance you could get your hands on the other guns?”

“I can get one M21 and 3 or 4 M14s. There are all kinds of M1911A1s lying around. We only have one at the moment.”

“When does your enlistment run out?”

“It ran out about a year back.”

“It did? Why are you staying?”

“First off, they said we were extended for a year. Second off, we didn’t have a place to go.”

“How are they paying you?”

“Food; plus use of a Hummer to get to and from home.”

“Can you get your hands on an M107 and ammo?”

“I’m not sure, maybe. I assume you’re referring to Mk211MP ammo?”

“If it’s available. We have quite a bit, but you can never have too much. We have on the order of 12,000-rounds of M33 Barrett and more than 15,000-rounds of Mk211.”

“I’ll talk to Jolene and call you on our private SINGARS channel. Anything else you need?”

“The one thing you can never have too much of is toilet paper.”

“Do you want me to leave some of the coffee here?”

“No, but I’d suggest you check all of the coffee service companies in Springfield. You can go through what’s loaded on the HEMTTs and keep some back, if you wish.”

When I saw Al unloading the Folgers coffee from the HEMTTs and putting it in Harry’s trailer, I considered the matter resolved. Either that or he was setting back the coffee for his personal use. Since the latter was out of character for the man, I assumed the former.

If he called on the radio, it had to be when everyone was away from the radios which happened on occasion. The next thing we knew, a M1044A1 Hummer pulling a military trailer pulled in. The Hummer was armed with an Mk19 Mod 3 40mm grenade machinegun and the trailer was half full of belted grenades. The remainder of the trailer was filled with their few personal possessions and weapons. Al had all the weapons we’d discussed and had scored a fourth M16A3 and M9 plus added M203s to their M16A3s. He only had 5 cans of Mk211 and about a case of .45acp 230 grain ball ammo. While he had almost no ammo for the .308 NATO rifles he had 6 cases of new USGI 20-round magazines. He also had a fair amount of M855 on stripper clips plus 4 cases of 124gr military ball 9mm.

We gobbled up the new USGI magazines like we hadn’t had lunch in a year. Since I’d ended up with some Browning Hi-Powers, I had several cases of 124gr Gold Dot +P and an equal quantity of Lawman in the same bullet weight. Al could shoot his FMJ for practice and switch to the Gold Dot for action. I’d loaded up on Browning 13 round magazines from Ammoman, he’d had them at \$165 for 10 magazines, so I’d purchased 4 lots of 10. He’d raised and then dropped his price on 7-round USGI M1911 magazines and I bought 40, just in case. I gave those to Al because he needed them more than I did. This was going to prove interesting once I showed him the remainder of the things we had.

“Did you get settled in?”

“It’s going to take a little getting used to. I lived in a house once that had a master bedroom closet almost bigger than the whole trailer.”

“About the only time people are in their trailers is to eat or sleep, Al. Be grateful Harry and Sally had all of those pullouts. Did you have a specialty in the Guard?”

“Plain old infantry, 11B5. Had a few qualifiers doing with skill level and seniority, but I was a plain old grunt.”

“Nobody spends much time in their trailers. We’ll have to adjust the guard rotation to incorporate you. Frank suggested having you take Stephanie’s place and leaving her to guard the farm. He thought that would be easier and not jumble up the schedule.”

“Sounds like a workable plan. Have you had to fight many battles?”

“That’s the funny part, Al. We only fought one. When we went to Stalag 9, we assumed they were in the process of attacking the acreage. They did, but only after we got back. Didn’t kill all of them because they ran out of ammo and surrendered.”

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Was it all bad? The answer to that question may depend on your viewpoint. Once the smoke, dust and fallout settled out of the air, we thought we were in for clear sailing. Vast areas that had been farmed before the war began to grow native grasses. With the reduction of industrialization, far fewer of the gases supposedly responsible for global warming were being produced. There were fewer livestock producing methane, very few motor vehicles. On earth, the most abundant greenhouse gases are, in order of relative abundance: water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone and CFCs.

Planet Earth had been near a tipping point. Global Warming had melted the Arctic ice-cap and was working on Antarctica. Places like Greenland and Iceland had been pouring billions of gallons of fresh water into the Atlantic Ocean. This had begun to lead to Global Cooling and depression of the Gulf Stream. The war and its aftermath stopped that due to the temporary global cooling and over the long term reversed the effects. Elimination of approximately 90% of the world’s population served to increase the benefit. What a terrible price to pay.

Eight months later Lynn presented us with a first, a single baby boy. The doctor did the belly button thing before he discharged her from the hospital in Rolla. As far as our militia activities went, we stayed close to home and rarely answered the new Sheriff’s calls for assistance. One time we actually had to go help him out. Those idiots from Stalag 9 had laid low for the better part of a year before they ran low on rations or something. They decided to attack Rolla, in broad daylight no less. To be honest, it took us longer to get there than solve the problem.



## The Other Shoe – Chapter 19

The Sheriff was scared, but the information he was supplying was accurate and he and his Deputies had them pinpointed. We started dropping off people with long range armaments about ½ mile from town. Following the Sheriff's instructions, we located the JBTs and eliminated them one by one. This time the ROE was El Degüello. They had their chance once and failed to take advantage of it; the only thing was we didn't bring a red flag, but they probably wouldn't have known what it meant.

I only knew what it meant because I'd studied the Battle of the Alamo. In those days, posting a red flag indicated no quarter would be given. By late afternoon San Antonio de Bexar was completely occupied by about 1500 Mexican troops, who quickly raised a blood-red flag signifying "No Quarter" above the San Fernando Church. Truth is stranger than fiction.

We were home in less than an hour and had our guns clean in a few minutes, waiting for the next time the Sheriff became overwhelmed. Hell, there were only about a dozen of them and many of us didn't fire a single shot. Stephanie now stayed on the farm as the primary guard and Jolene took over her place canning the garden output.

By the time we'd harvested the crops and finished up the garden, we had food for ourselves plus wheat, oats and corn for those few survivors in Licking and large band in Rolla. We wouldn't take greenbacks because there wasn't much of a government to have full faith and credit in. We set up a barter economy and accepted durable goods with value to us, firearms and ammo in good working condition plus gold and silver and pre-65 90% silver coins. I suspect we cleaned out a few coin collections. People quickly realized that their coin collections contained a pretty fair sum. The only other thing we accepted was labor chits. A commitment of one full day for a family of four got them fed for the day and an additional one day's food supply.

Slowly, inexorably, the MZBs and JBTs disappeared. They were outnumbered and a new criminal justice evolved post war. The first things that disappeared were prisons. The only jails remaining held captives accused of a crime. Justice was quickly determined and generally found at the end of a piece of rope. The hangings weren't hidden behind prison doors; they were conducted on the local gallows that nearly every county seat had built. In western movies, we used to hear the expression, *They hang horse thieves*. That was the case now, and it wasn't limited to taking horses.

Even as society started to sort itself out, the planet began to heal from mankind's' excesses. We named our new son Jeremiah, Jere for short. That came from the movie *In Harm's Way*; Jeremiah was Admiral Rockwell Torrey's son. *The Lord said, Be fruitful and multiply*. Everyone on the acreage did the best they could. The result was we outgrew our digs. None of the jobs any of us had before the war were available. What was available was a 2 section farm not that far from Licking. We started a campaign to find housing to put on the 1280. We ended up with a collection of singlewide mobile homes

and not just one for each family, but rather a collection because those children would grow up and need their own places to live.

We made a few road trips in the early years, Geneseo, Illinois, being an early trip with a swing by Lake City on the way back. We found various distributors or manufacturers and built up an arsenal for our children. We'd train them on .223s and graduate them to .308s when they were ready. Suppressors became the new norm because they had the side benefit of protecting your hearing and Doctors were few and far between.

During those days just about any kind of medical professional had all the work he/she wanted. Some knew where the government stashed the emergency medical supplies that were held back for disasters, and that helped a lot. The government called it the Strategic National Stockpile. The SNS is a national repository of antibiotics, chemical antidotes, antitoxins, life-support medications, IV administration, airway maintenance supplies, and medical/surgical items. The SNS is designed to supplement and re-supply state and local public health agencies in the event of a national emergency anywhere and at any time within the US or its territories. People worked hard absent the technology of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. No doubt that accounted for, in part, the general reduction of long term medical conditions. Often, if you developed a long term medical condition these days, it killed you if the needed drug wasn't in the SNS. Only a few drugs have a truly short shelf life. Epinephrine and the cyclines come to mind. Medicines were now distributed by the doctors and remaining hospitals.

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The very large cities were abandoned or placed on the back burner for cleanup and rebuilding as the US embraced its agrarian roots. For the most part, manufacturing was very limited before the Industrial Revolution and it was now. It didn't matter that there weren't many cars because there wasn't much gasoline. Cars were converted to run on pure ethanol or biodiesel. Plus, most families had a work truck and some sort of passenger vehicle to haul the kids. Often those were converted SUVs.

We made out like bandits with a license to steal. Once we were settled on the new farm, we had room to grow all kinds of crops. We also set aside 40 acres solely for gardening. We recovered new farm equipment from farm equipment dealers and we did have one full time mechanic in our midst. Anything that broke got fixed, pronto. We even went with some of the big stuff, like a self-propelled combine with grain and corn heads.

You take a product like Mason jars and the lids, for example. With a 40 acre garden we needed quite a few. We asked around on the radio until someone told us where the factory was and where they warehoused their inventory. We did a convoy and brought back all we could haul and there were too many for us to bring back at one time.

We located and dismantled a large commercial greenhouse so we could grow something year around. Those labor chits we issued in exchange to food started to come in handy. With the proper equipment, it's not hard to farm 1,280 (gross) acres. We found a

locker plant to butcher our beef and butcher and cure our pork. Hired help did the chickens. We only grew a few sheep and that was primarily for their wool, few of us liked mutton or lamb.

Two of the largest states producing dry beans in the past were the Dakotas. We duplicated their efforts on a smaller scale. We also had one rather large rice paddy putting us  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way to a proper diet of beans, rice and corn. One source provided a large grain roller and we could produce rolled oats. Another provided large grain mills allowing us to grind flour.

By many standards, ours was a small operation producing a bit of this and that. By other standards, ours was an operation to emulate. We grew canola for biodiesel, corn for ethanol, livestock feed and Missouri sipping whiskey. The Missouri wine region was further north, up by Jefferson City. Since we weren't in business to please others, we grew what we liked and let others meet market demands for things we didn't like.

Some things disappeared from our shelves over time. We had no more Spam, tuna, macaroni & cheese dinners. We had macaroni and made cheese but it wasn't quite the same. Since we didn't bother to process cheese, you had to settle for Colby or mild cheddar to go with your macaroni. You had to grate it yourself and mix it with milk to get a cheese sauce.

Chuck and Cindy just turned 12 and they got their own rifles and handguns. We kept them under lock and key for now and only took them out to practice. Lynette and Mark were about 10½ and would get theirs for their 12<sup>th</sup> birthdays. Jeremiah just turned 7 and it would be a while for him.

In addition to the 4 Mini-14s and the four M4s, we scored a group of Glocks in 9mm and 45acp calibers, the short frames. Since we had five instead of four, and since there were several new children, we went shopping and came up with more of the Ruger's and Colts. We traded for some rifles from a manufacturer headquartered in Virginia and came away with quite the haul including 416s, 417s, USP Tactical's, UMPs, MG4s, M320s and finally the MSG 90A1. It was just about H&K's full product line.

Now, if you're thinking we'd turned the farm into an armed camp, I can't argue with that. We hadn't had trouble in years; that didn't mean it wasn't out there waiting for an opportunity. Plus the equation wasn't complete or TOM had been wrong, we'd only had two major disasters, the economic meltdown and WW III. Despite all of my earlier speculating we hadn't had any natural disaster that affected us. Well, we had a tornado go across one field, if you choose to count that.

The following year we took over another 640 that had gone back to grass and used it as a permanent pasture for our huge herd of cattle and horses. The separate hog house on the place was adequate for our 40 sows. Although we'd located a trainload of coal bound for some coal fired electrical plant and burned it instead, we still harvested wood. Somehow coal in a fireplace didn't ring my chimes. Harry and Stephanie married about

5 years back, but made a conscious decision not to have children. Harry thought he was too old and Stephanie was worried about having a baby with Down's syndrome. I can't say that I blame them for that.

Even all of the time that had passed didn't keep us from maintaining a watchful eye. All of the teens were required to take a turn on guard duty. We only had one rule, no coed guard teams. They might get occupied playing grab ass and we wouldn't get the warning.

Was everything easy to find? Not on your life, tires were a prime example. Sometimes you'd find new tires that the rubber had aged to the point where they were beyond use. You took what you found and took your chances. Perhaps some of the failures of tires could relate to their storage conditions. New batteries were easier because they were stored dry.

Research and tests show that as tires age, they begin to dry out and become potentially dangerous, even if unused. Aged tires may appear to have similar properties to newly manufactured tires; however once the vehicle is traveling at high speeds (i.e. on a freeway) the tread could peel off, leading to severe loss of control and perhaps a rollover.

The date of a tire's manufacturer is found on the rim, to the right of the product code. The date code is often found on the inward side of the tire, so if they are already installed on the vehicle, the person has to lie underneath the car with a flashlight to check the dates. The date is a four digit code WWYY, with WW denoting the week (1-52) and YY denoting the year.

Many automakers and several tire manufacturers (Bridgestone, Michelin) have recommended a six year limit on tires. However, an ABC's 20/20 investigative report by Brian Ross found that many major retailers such as Goodyear, Wal-Mart, and Sears were selling tires that had been produced six or more years ago. Currently, no law for aged tires exists in the United States.

Our vehicles lasted much longer for a variety of reasons. First, we didn't drive a lot due to the shortage a fuel and lack of places to go to. Second, not driving a lot meant you might only put 6,000-miles a year on your most active vehicle whereas, in times past, the little old lady who only drove her car to church on Sunday was credited with driving about 12,000 miles per year and the lowest mileage bracket was 7,000-miles-per-year. Third, most of the roads weren't being maintained and nobody drove fast on a freeway any longer because it wasn't safe.

First grass began to appear in the cracks in most roads. That was followed by frost heaves in the northern part of the country. The safest roads in those areas were the gravel roads and even they became subject to wash-boarding over time. County maintenance departments, to the extent they existed, were barely able to maintain dirt and gravel roads and hard surfaced roads began to become unusable.

It was around Lynette and Mark's 12<sup>th</sup> birthday that TOM's prediction came true. You wouldn't think that about 14 years between events would qualify as happening in 3s but if you considered the scope of the disaster, it had to be true. I believe I hit on it earlier when I discussed possibilities, but I never quite believed what happened, could happen.

You don't know the meaning of cold unless you've worked on the North Slope or in Antarctica, up until now. You could almost see your breath before you left the house. The well on the farm didn't freeze and the septic was buried deep, just in case. No sooner had the ash stopped falling than we began to get snow. Now you can think about that 9' Indian. We had a Bobcat skid steer loader and it could barely keep the area around the homes clear. The upside was that we didn't need to maintain the guard force and the teens were put to shoveling snow.

A ham operator from Québec reported 750cm (24.6') of snow in downtown Montreal. A normal year produced about 300cm, maximum. We stayed in touch and come spring the snow didn't melt. Our snow settled significantly over the winter, but the spring melt didn't occur until after Independence Day. The previous year's crop had been harvested and put up. We'd held off producing ethanol until later in the year and dropped the idea completely after earthquakes and eruptions. We lacked the facilities to dry the mash into livestock feed.

We had food growing in the greenhouse and it was enough or more to see us through a year at a time. The wind blew like crazy and we weren't short of power from the wind turbine. We had to be very judicious in its use, however. The disadvantage of our move was that we no longer had a cave to fall back on for shelter. It was also much further to harvest firewood. We could, however, bring dump trucks loaded with coal from the train we captured.

A large coal train called a "unit train" may be two kilometers (over a mile) long, containing 100 cars with 100 tons of coal in each one, for a total load of 10,000 tons. A large plant under full load requires at least one coal delivery this size every day. Plants may get as many as three to five trains a day, especially in "peak season", during the summer months when power consumption is high. Off hand, I'd say we had enough for a few weeks, at least; our train had 104 cars. The only thing we lacked was an especially good way to unload the train. On a good day, we could maybe unload ½ a car.

Those wood burners we'd put in the travel trailers worked just fine as a source of supplemental heat and they did burn coal. We added more to the new singlewide mobile homes we found. We were trying our best to avoid running the generators due to their being fuel hogs. We were also guarding our supply of propane and when we finally got to Jefferson City, we brought back every delivery truck we could find. We hadn't exhausted the supply although we were working on it. Everyone had installed a 1,100-gallon propane tank and it almost got them through the winter. The real problem was the dry air the propane furnaces produced. We found and installed whole-house or furnace humidifiers, which connect to a home's HVAC system to provide humidity to the entire house. They did serve to prevent colds and the humidified air felt warmer.

The snow returned on Labor Day. It was what they call a skiff of snow, e.g., a small amount. We hurried to the locker plant to pick up our butchered beef and pork. We had accumulated several more freezers and could probably store a 2-year supply of meat. However, once the roads closed, it would be very difficult to get to. We were butchering 2-3 hogs per family and ½ beef. Except for some of the extra smoked meats, bacon and ham, we traded a portion to the butcher for his labor and sold him the balance at a fair price. A fair price is all the market can bear, if you're curious.

We spent much of the previous long winter grinding corn and wheat and rolling oats. We packaged those products in 25# bags just as we did with the beans and rice. Our cheese went in 5-pound blocks, packaged by our seal-a-meals. We kept a skeptical eye on our diminishing supply of toilet paper, coffee and tea. It appeared that next summer we'd need to go looking for paper products and a supply of green coffee we could roast ourselves.

The Coffea plant is native to subtropical Africa and southern Asia. It belongs to a genus of 10 species of flowering plants of the family Rubiaceae. It is an evergreen shrub or small tree that may grow 5 meters (16 ft) tall when unpruned. The leaves are dark green and glossy, usually 10–15 centimeters (3.9–5.9 in) long and 6.0 centimeters (2.4 in) wide. It produces clusters of fragrant, white flowers that bloom simultaneously. The fruit berry is oval, about 1.5 centimeters (0.6 in) long, and green when immature, but ripens to yellow, then crimson, becoming black on drying. Each berry usually contains two seeds, but from 5 to 10 percent of the berries have only one; these are called peaberries. Berries ripen in seven to nine months.

Just thinking out loud here, but what if we could locate some coffee seeds and move the smaller greenhouse from the acreage? Woo-Hoo, we might be able to grow our own coffee and tea. It seems like they liked the same climate conditions and we should be able to create any climate in a greenhouse. That's just a guess and we don't have any coffee beans to plant. While not the largest producer, Mexico produced 311 million tons in 2005. Four single roaster companies buy more than 50 percent of all of the annual production: Kraft (Maxwell House), Nestlé (Nescafé), Procter & Gamble (Folgers), and Sara Lee (Douwe Egberts, Kanis & Gunnink & Big Joe, Burger King's house brand of coffee).

On the other front, Scott Paper, the inventor of toilet tissue, merged with Kimberly Clark. Georgia Pacific produced Northern brand tissue and Procter & Gamble had purchased Charmin Paper Company in 1957. They discontinued all of their products except bath tissue. Charmin was manufactured by the Hoberg Paper Company in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Of note was the fact that on November 19th 2007 - Charmin says a final farewell to Dick Wilson, 91, who portrayed the loveable Mr. Whipple on Charmin advertising from 1964-1985, but only because he died.

A personal quote, "I've done thirty-eight pictures and nobody remembers any of them, but they all remember me selling toilet paper."

They replaced Mr. Whipple with a cartoon bear.

The snow came early and came deep; however it melted early, too. We had a really good amount of subsoil moisture and it looked like it might be a banner year, crop wise. And then, it turned hot and we didn't get a lot of spring rain. It began to use up the accumulated moisture in the soil and the old well didn't have enough capacity to allow us to irrigate. Early summer showers came to our rescue, just in time.

Unlike the previous year, winter came late, more like December than late August. It was cold and very dry. We figured that didn't bode well for our situation unless we got some snowfall to replace the moisture in the soil. It didn't snow until March and that was only 4-5 inches, about ½" of water. The last snow of the winter came on April 15<sup>th</sup>, again, 4-5". Our soil was nearly bone dry and we decided to seed grass to keep the soil from blowing away.

Fortunately we'd held on to most of last year's crops and had feed for our livestock. The horses and cattle could graze on the grass when it came up reducing our need for feed. We pressed the oil out of the canola and fed the pulp to the hogs. I think they'll eat about anything (even people, or so I've heard).

We planted a one acre garden, just enough to get by, that we could irrigate. We watered morning and night and I think the garden did better than the large one the year before. Al suggested to David that with the change in weather, we'd better consider upping our guard force because food would again be short. Everyone spent some time on the range checking the sighting on their weapons and refreshing their skills. I didn't think they'd be any trouble this long after the war, but why take a chance? Because of our ongoing requirement to maintain firearms skills, nobody actually had to spend long on the range.

We had a nice little community on the 1,280; eight families and everyone aged 14 and up was considered as and treated as an adult, up to a limit. Hanky-panky was still discouraged, to the extent that we could do it. Two words describe that winter; cold and dry. I left out the wind part, it was ferocious and at one time I thought the braking system on the turbine would be overwhelmed. When spring rolled around, we'd used up most of the firewood, a portion of the coal and most of the propane tanks were near empty.

We went back to Jefferson City for all the propane we could haul back and tried to find another unit trainload of coal. We let four look, two vets and two teenagers and the rest of us set about replenishing our wood supply. We found precut firewood at the business locations of two guys who cut firewood for a living and took that so we'd have a supply of dry wood to begin the winter. We went through the Mark Twain National Forest marking standing dead trees with orange paint and marking their locations on a map. We set it up so we could do it in steps, locating the trees, cutting the trees, transporting the logs, and splitting the firewood. Our goal was to cut, split and stack 200 cords or 25,600ft<sup>3</sup>.

We refilled our propane tanks and sent the delivery trucks off to be refilled. We actually didn't need any diesel or gasoline because we hadn't needed to run the generators except for 15 minutes weekly. There was a sense of unease within the group and Lynn and I thought it might be related to the weather. The best way to find out was to call a meeting and ask a few direct questions.

"We've noticed a feeling of unease within the community. Can anyone explain what's bothering them?"

"I'll tell you what I think," Frank said. "First it's that we didn't grow any food this year besides garden crops. Second, most everyone in the area knows that we have and produce food. On more than one occasion, I've seen people come to Licking to see if we were at the Farmer's Market. They didn't look too happy when they discovered we weren't there."

"I don't know if any of you are aware," David added, "but they've had cars out cruising trying to locate our farm. Fortunately the only people besides ourselves who know where it is are the people we do private trades with and they'd be foolish to let it slip."

"We're not going looking for an Abrams, if that's what's on your mind."

"It wasn't, but I wouldn't mind having an M3 Bradley Cavalry Scout Vehicle. The current model will resist 30mm shells and we would need but two people to man the vehicle. That 25mm Bushmaster is a very impressive piece of ordnance."

"I'll go along with the majority. I feel that I should point out that we haven't had any trouble in years."

"Let's keep it that way, Hank."

"All in favor of getting to M3 Bradley's raise your hand. Ok, it's unanimous, we'll get two plus the AP and HE ammo for the Bushmaster and ammo for the M240."

Here we went again, becoming even more of an armed camp. Al was quick to volunteer where he thought we could get the Bradley Cavalry Scout Vehicles and the ammo. For a minute, I thought he was going to ask, "Would you rather have it and not need it than..." We'd all but worn the expression out justifying our other acquisitions.

We continued to accumulate logs and a small party went looking for the Bradley's. We now had 4,000-gallons for each of our propane tanks, the tanks contents and one 3,000-gallon delivery truck. We finally stopped harvesting timber in September and joined the crew that was splitting and stacking the firewood. To improve our rate of work, we picked up another splitter identical to the first, doubling our daily output.



Over the course of the following winter, we got more moisture, about 20" of snow which was still not enough to grow crops. We contracted for 4 additional irrigation wells, feeling that we had little other choice. The driller said that wouldn't be enough and that we'd need at least one per 160 and preferably one per 40. We went with one per 160. Our money tree wasn't doing well due to the drought.

When I found time, I re-read the Abrupt Climate Change paper by Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall. Frankly, I was looking for hints to explain the cold, long and dry winter the previous year and the sudden rise in temperature and low moisture levels we'd experienced recently.

The report explored how such an abrupt climate change scenario could potentially destabilize the geo-political environment, leading to skirmishes, battles, and even war due to resource constraints such as:

- 1) Food shortages due to decreases in net global agricultural production
- 2) Decreased availability and quality of fresh water in key regions due to shifted precipitation patterns, causing more frequent floods and droughts
- 3) Disrupted access to energy supplies due to extensive sea ice and storminess

We had the war and it sure wasn't over an abrupt climate change. The war was over the usual things that all wars are caused by: famine, a worldwide economic meltdown, the distribution of natural resources or, perhaps, a difference in religion. We dropped the first nuke back in 1945. The Japanese quit before they found out how many we had. The United States expected to have another atomic bomb ready for use in the third week of August, with three more in September and a further three in October. On August 10, Major General Leslie Groves, military director of the Manhattan Project, sent a memorandum to General George Marshall, in which he wrote that "the next bomb... should be ready for delivery on the first suitable weather after 17 or August 18."

On the same day, Marshall endorsed the memo with the comment, "It is not to be released over Japan without express authority from the President." There was already discussion in the War Department about conserving the bombs in production until Operation Downfall, the projected invasion of Japan, had begun. "The problem now [August 13th] is whether or not, assuming the Japanese do not capitulate, to continue dropping them every time one is made and shipped out there or whether to hold them... and then pour them all on in a reasonably short time. Not all in one day, but over a short period. And that also takes into consideration the target that we are after. In other words, should we not concentrate on targets that will be of the greatest assistance to an invasion rather than industry, morale, psychology, and the like? Nearer the tactical use rather than other use.

Irrigating 1,260 acres of ground is a truly difficult project. The irrigation pipe alone would take a couple of years to locate. Another decision had to be made concerning how we'd irrigate. Would we use sprinkler pipes or small ditches? What was it Jodie Foster called it? Occam's razor? "All other things being equal, the simplest solution is the best." It

would be ditches. We could create them when we planted seed. We'd run irrigation pipes to the high end of the ditch and it would flow to the other end or something like that.

The paper didn't give me any information that I/we didn't already have. It was hot and dry in the summers and cold and dry in the winters. The water had to be going somewhere. Our problem was that we weren't where it was going. As one might imagine, reports from the National Weather Service simply didn't exist. If they had, we'd have learned that the Arctic Ocean was covered in ice and snow didn't melt above 45°N latitude. That's about 1° south of the North Dakota border.

We had extreme temperature ranges and a drought. Anything that couldn't be watered by irrigation wells wouldn't grow. We'd cut back the garden to a single acre, only growing enough to tide us over until the next year. A thought kept coming to mind, but before I could grab it, it sort of slipped away. It was something I'd read and it was recently. Why does the term Younger Dryas come to mind? Then the light bulb in my head went off and I grabbed my Abrupt Climate Change paper.

"The research suggests that once temperature rises above some threshold, adverse weather conditions could develop relatively abruptly, with persistent changes in the atmospheric circulation causing drops in some regions of 5-10 degrees Fahrenheit in a single decade. Paleoclimatic evidence suggests that altered climatic patterns could last for as much as a century, as they did when the ocean conveyor collapsed 8,200 years ago, or, at the extreme, could last as long as 1,000 years as they did during the Younger Dryas, which began about 12,700 years ago."

This abrupt change scenario is characterized by the following conditions:

- Annual average temperatures drop by up to 5 degrees Fahrenheit over Asia and North America and 6 degrees Fahrenheit in northern Europe
- Annual average temperatures increase by up to 4 degrees Fahrenheit in key areas throughout Australia, South America, and southern Africa.
- Drought persists for most of the decade in critical agricultural regions and in the water resource regions for major population centers in Europe and eastern North America.
- Winter storms and winds intensify, amplifying the impacts of the changes. Western Europe and the North Pacific experience enhanced winds.

Schwartz and Randall, again. But wait, shouldn't that have all been canceled out by the nuclear winter? Maybe, providing we had a nuclear winter; the jury is still out on that. As long as we're discussing confusing issues, why would we need 10,000 tons of coal? Preservation of resources, pure and simple; our supply of propane for the stoves and water heaters couldn't last forever and our coal/wood burning stoves were a great source of heat. In prewar terms, those 10,000 tons of coal would be just enough to power a large coal burning power plant for ONE DAY. It would last us just a bit longer, maybe a millennium. We'd probably run out of ammo before we ran out of coal and here we were looking for more.

## The Other Shoe – Chapter 20

One other question, if the most recent one was called the Younger Dryas, when was the Older Dryas? It preceded the Younger Dryas by about 3,000 years and the Oldest Dryas preceded that by another 4,000 years, give or take a couple of days. Put another way, the Oldest Dryas was about 18,000-15,000 years BP; the Older Dryas was about 12,000-11,800 years BP and the Younger Dryas was about 11,000-10,000 years BP (before present). I can't check that without Wiki.

We weren't going to waste the coal on starting up a power plant because our wind turbine was working just fine. Most of the time, the generators only kicked in for their periodic run cycle. Did we have it made? Where did you ever get a silly idea like that? We had food to eat and left some of our LTS food in the cave on the acreage, call it our cache. The new, to us, large farm of 3 sections required a lot of work but with the water shortage, we were forced to curtail production.

It had been reported that people were unhappy that we hadn't brought goods to the Farmers Market in Licking. It was likewise reported that cars had been seen cruising up and down roads attempting to locate our farm. I don't know why they were having trouble; it's in the same place it's always been. Oh, that right, we 'forgot' to tell them where that was.

We salvaged (to save used, damaged, or rejected goods for recycling or further use) and we scavenged (to search for or through discarded material in order to find something usable). Close, but not exactly the same. We did not loot (money or goods that have been pillaged during wartime or a riot)! Doing any of the three posed a risk; the abandoned property might not be abandoned, rejected or discarded. There were more sources of propane out here somewhere, too.

With our five kids growing up and us growing older, we most definitely had to plan for the future. For example, we hadn't been attacked in years. That didn't mean that someone might not drive down our road tomorrow and discover the farm. Our force, that numbered less than 20, would be hard pressed to repel a major invasion by a criminal gang. The world is filled with two kinds of people, good people and bad people. Among those good people one may find some desperate good people willing to do anything to provide for their family.

All they had to do was ask. Remember what I said about pride? An approach like this, "My family is starving, I do anything to provide for them," would probably get them an invite and a good meal, maybe even a job offer. An approach like this, "My family is starving, I'm going to take your food," is a one way ticket to a coffin.

Our group was nothing more than unique. We were mostly combat veterans and some had some kind of Special Forces training. After they recovered the Bradley we even had a 25mm cannon. A great weapon for the teens, they're mostly out of harm's way and they probably get a kick out of shooting the M242. We maintained lookout towers, a re-

cent addition, at one mile intervals and they could see about 1 mile or more in any direction. We were running full security long after the war.

Harry was slowing down although that didn't matter because we had abandoned the 160 years back when we took over the section and later the second and third sections. Our herd of horses had all been saddle horses; over the years, we began to add and breed draft horses. We'd end up farming with horses like the Amish or most American farmers did early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. We wouldn't do it until we had too, though. One 40 acre field was farmed using horses; what you might call a training field. Some of the salvage came from museums that featured horse drawn farm equipment. Amish farmers tend to use a team of about seven horses or mules when spring plowing and as Amish farmers often helped each other plow, teams were sometimes changed at noon. Using this method about 10 acres can be plowed per day in light soils and about 2 acres in heavy soils.

The twins used two single bottom walking plows and it took them the better part of a week to plow the 40 acre field. They used teams of two horses and changed teams frequently. When it came time to disk, they used a four horse team and completed that in three long days. Dragging was even quicker than disking, taking only two days. Using horses, it took two weeks what could have been completed in a few days using a modern tractor with a 3-5 bottom plow, 24' tandem disc and perhaps a 24' drag. The disk and drags were called harrows by whoever wrote the article on Wiki. Drag harrows, Wiki claimed, weren't used much. The reason it took so long to disk was that the horses were walking on the very uneven plowed field, not because it was all that hard to pull the disk harrow. It was easy to see why the Amish farmers would get together and worked one farm at a time; it was a tremendous amount of work and required many draft horses.

We now had more adolescents and teens than adults. The easiest thing to teach them was marksmanship and use of our assorted ordnance. They considered it to be fun, but occasionally questioned the need because we hadn't been attacked for a very long time. It was a dangerous sentiment that we tried to discourage. On the other hand, farming was becoming more difficult as the modern implements wore out and we couldn't find replacement/repair parts. The parts may have been out there, somewhere, but we couldn't travel the country hoping to find a few specific parts and we couldn't find anyone that could build them for us.

David and Donald, the twins, courted ladies up in Rolla and eventually got married. The only singles on the farm were the children. They ranged in age from under 5 to nearly 20. In my humble opinion, we'd made it too soft for them and the farm was known far and wide as a place to avoid at all costs. One would have thought our problems were over; unfortunately, they weren't. If you've considered what global warming might do to the planet, then you also had to consider the concept that global warming could lead to global cooling. I noted it earlier in my diary, but it just keeps getting colder. It's not a rapid change in temperature, just 1°F per year. We've been keeping records of the temperature and moisture since the war and it continues to get colder and dryer.

I believe in my heart that it will reverse. I'm just guessing, but I think it's likely that the Arctic and Antarctic are where the moisture is all going. Lord knows that Greenland had just about melted off. Iceland didn't have much ice left when we had the war. Did we actually have a nuclear winter that triggered another mini ice age? There's no NWS to ask. People we heard on the radio years before have long since stopped transmitting. Don't believe the old saying that no news is good news, 'cause it isn't true.

It seems like the first countries we stopped hearing from were in Northern Europe. From Scandinavia, it moved further south, a little at a time. One would have thought that, if they had a problem, something would have been said. We were all having problems trying to survive in the aftermath even though we hadn't been in many battles with people. I put it that way because we were battling Mother Nature. We had hot summers, cold winters and very little moisture. The crops we planted became fewer and fewer and most of the animals grazed or went hungry.

Pigs are omnivore, which means that they consume both plants and animals. Pigs will scavenge and have been known to eat any kind of food, including dead insects, worms, tree bark, rotting carcasses, garbage, and even other pigs. Chickens are omnivores. In the wild, they often scratch at the soil to search for seeds, insects and even larger animals such as lizards or young mice. Cattle and horses will graze the pasture and we could pump enough water to irrigate to keep the grass growing.

Our food came from the greenhouse, for the most part. Certain crops we still planted in the garden, but had to be irrigated. Instead of farming most of the 1,280, we were actually farming less than 40. Just enough to grow some wheat, oats, and assorted bean crops. The most certain thing you could say about the weather was that you couldn't be certain what the next season would be like, but it would most likely be hot summers, cold winters and very little moisture.

On another subject, the M2HB, you individually headspace and timed each barrel, right? Unlike the headspace and timing of something like the M240, the gunner does it every time they put in a new barrel, right? WRONG. We found that after inserting a new barrel the timing rarely needed to be changed. However, every barrel had a different number of clicks out after it was inserted. We counted the clicks and wrote it on a tag we attached to the barrel. Voila, pre-headspaced M2HB barrels; insert fully, turn out the number of click on the tag, verify with headspace gauge. Poor TOM, he could have explained that and not caught hell from the squirrels.

o

Wow, I haven't made a diary entry for about two years now. The thing is, there's nothing new to add. It got cold and leveled off around 14°F below normal. We were able to grow small crops to keep the livestock going although it was close more than once. I think maybe I'll wrap this up, not much point this long after the economic meltdown, WW III and the modern mini ice age to keep taking notes.

If I were to advise someone about what they should do, it wouldn't be to get a cave in the Ozarks and hide out. I do believe that I would advise them to include a .308 NATO caliber rifle in their preps. I would probably also suggest a .45ACP for a handgun and a high capacity 12 gauge shotgun. If they wanted other firearms, they should stick with popular cartridges. For a lever gun, there's nothing wrong with a good used Winchester .30-30. They have fewer parts than the Marlin, although the Marlin would be a good second choice.

Should you decide that you want to salvage/scavenge after TSHTF, remember, not everyone agrees that it's not looting. Your best bet is to be well prepared in advance so all you have to do is fill in the holes. It wouldn't be good timing to wait until the missiles are in the air to decide you need a CD V-715 or CD V-717.

One other thing and I'll quit. It's about TOM's fallout spreadsheet. Remember, radiation begins to decay immediately. Therefore, you have to make allowances and determine the peak radiation at the site of the blast by working backwards. You can use the spreadsheet to do that and determine the peak level at detonation. Back in the days after Obama got elected, there was talk about TSHTF. Remember...

The effects of a 1mT surface burst are assuming a wind speed of 15mph, a wind direction of due east and a time frame of 7 days:

3,000 Rem

Distance: 30 miles

Much more than a lethal dose of radiation. Death can occur within hours of exposure. About 10 years will need to pass before levels of radioactivity in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

900 Rem

Distance: 90 miles

A lethal dose of radiation. Death occurs from two to fourteen days.

300 Rem

Distance: 160 miles

Causes extensive internal damage, including harm to nerve cells and the cells that line the digestive tract, and results in a loss of white blood cells. Temporary hair loss is another result.

90 Rem

Distance: 250 miles

Causes a temporary decrease in white blood cells, although there are no immediate harmful effects. Two to three years will need to pass before radioactivity levels in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

Radius of destructive circle: 1.7 miles

12 pounds per square inch

At the center lies a crater 200 feet deep and 1000 feet in diameter. The rim of this crater is 1,000 feet wide and is composed of highly radioactive soil and debris. Nothing recognizable remains within about 3,200 feet (0.6 miles) from the center, except, perhaps, the remains of some buildings' foundations. At 1.7 miles, only some of the strongest buildings – those made of reinforced, poured concrete – are still standing. Ninety-eight percent of the population in this area is dead.

Radius: 2.7 miles

5 psi

Virtually everything is destroyed between the 12 and 5-psi rings. The walls of typical multi-story buildings, including apartment buildings, have been completely blown out. The bare, structural skeletons of more and more buildings rise above the debris as you approach the 5-psi ring. Single-family residences within this area have been completely blown away – only their foundations remain. Fifty percent of the population between the 12 and 5-psi rings are dead. Forty percent are injured.

Radius: 4.7 miles

2 psi

Any single-family residences that have not been completely destroyed are heavily damaged. The windows of office buildings have been blown away, as have some of their walls. The contents of these buildings' upper floors, including the people who were working there, are scattered on the street. A substantial amount of debris clutters the entire area. Five percent of the population between the 5 and 2-psi rings are dead. Forty-five percent are injured.

Radius: 7.4 miles

1 psi

Residences are moderately damaged. Commercial buildings have sustained minimal damage. Twenty-five percent of the population between the 2 and 1-psi rings are injured, mainly by flying glass and debris. Many others have been injured from thermal radiation – the heat generated by the blast. The remaining seventy-five percent are unhurt.

After Obama was elected, nobody had ammo for sale and Assault Weapons were on a waiting list. If you were prepared, you already had yours. More ammo might be nice, but not at a premium price. Don't kid yourself; you can have too much ammo. But, you can always use it as trade goods.

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